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THE ETERNAL VERITIES

A SERIES OF PLAIN ARGUMENTS

SHOWING

THE ABUNDANT EVIDENCES OF THE TRUTH OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, DRAWN FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

BY

D. L. MILLER

Author of "Wanderings in Bible Lands," "Girdling the Globe," Etc.

FIFTH EDITION

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THE AUTHOR

DEDICATES THIS BOOK TO

ALL WHO LOVE THE TRUTH,

AND WHO ARE

WILLING TO SEARCH FOR IT.

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PREFACE.

THERE is no lack of books on the evidences of Christianity, nor of arguments and facts which demonstrate the authenticity and genuineness of the Holy Bible. Since the days of Keith and Paley this important and extensive field of research has been worked over again and again with painstaking care, and authors, using as a basis the incomparable works of these modern pioneers in research, have given us numerous volumes on the important subject. These works have been, for the most part, written for the minister and scholar rather than for the laity and the common people. There are hundreds of learned books, bulky and costly, profound and too deep for the unlearned, treating on the evidences, but the ordinary reader finds them obscure and not easily understood. The masses of the people will neither buy nor read them, and so remain uninformed as to the abundant evidences of the truth of God's Book.

The purpose of the author in this book is to give a brief and simple statement of some of the most important evidences which have led godly men, who have carefully gone over the ground, to accept the Bible as the Word of God. The writer does not claim originality for this work. It should be regard-

ed as a compilation of facts gathered from many sources. What is commonly called originality is only a rearrangement of the colors on the canvas. The wise man said there is nothing new under the sun. The author has not sought for the new and novel, but rather for such an arrangement of what we already have as will bring the facts within the easy reach of the people. As to how far he has succeeded in his purpose, the kind reader must be the judge.

If we are to meet the growing evil of skepticism we must place in the hands of our people, old and young alike, the testimony in our possession of the truth of God's Book. In this way they may be prepared, when approached with the sophistical arguments of infidelity, to meet the enemies of the truth.

It is true, as Keith says, that the light of evidence, though sufficient to dispel the cloud of the understanding, is yet unable to penetrate the veil of the heart. Skepticism at best is not a subject for boasting. It is easy to exclude the noonday light from our eyes; and it is easy to resist the clearest truth by hardening our heart against it. Into what else can the want of conviction be resolved than into the scriptural solution of the difficulty—an evil heart of unbelief? It is most difficult to get people to believe who have set their hearts against believing. They will not come to the light that they may see and un-

derstand, and when the light is taken to them they resolutely close their eyes to it and their hearts to the truth. But this does not relieve us of the responsibility of making every effort in our power to send out the light of truth. If the minds of our people are prepared by a study of the evidences of Christianity, and strengthened by a knowledge of the truth, and enlightened by the Holy Spirit, they can meet the unbeliever on his own ground and need have no fear of the results. Our duty is to place in the hands of all a weapon of defense to be wielded against unbelief.

The author is under obligations to writers who have preceded him in this line of work. The works of Keith, Paley, Pierson, Fisher, Gladstone, Nelson, Osborne, Hastings, Dawson and others have been consulted and freely used in the preparation of these pages. Acknowledgment is made, especially to those here named, for helpful suggestions and for facts given.

In the concluding chapters will be found a series of illustrations showing the remarkable agreement between "the land and the Book." These were for the most part written in Palestine and came under the author's own observation during his five different visits to the Holy Land. It was because the conditions in the land where the Bible was written agree so precisely with the statements made in the Book that

the writer was first led into a consideration of this subject. It was the purpose at first to give a number of these illustrations in a smaller volume, but later it was thought best to enlarge the work and present them in connection with some of the evidences of Christianity.

This has been done with the ability that God has given. If good shall result from this effort, let His name be praised. It is the fervent prayer and hope of the author that this work of his maturer years may be helpful to many in preparing them to meet the assaults of infidelity upon the Bible and upon the stainless life and perfect character of our Lord Jesus Christ.

D. L. Miller.

Mount Morris, Illinois, 1902.

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THE ETERNAL VERITIES

CHAPTER ONE.

INTRODUCTION.

The Holy Scriptures are the Inspired Word of God.

Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.—2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.

The Bible contains the inspired Word of God; it is perfect and all-sufficient for the redemption of the human race. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." The Book is inspired in the sense that God, by the Holy Spirit, moved directly and immediately upon the souls and hearts of its writers, and caused them to make a record of the things written in the Book; and this for the very purpose of revealing His will to the children of men. It is all-sufficient because it contains the entire will of God concerning us, and is broad enough and deep enough to cover every want of the human soul. Nothing is wanting in God's perfect work, His revelation to the children of men. It con-

tains the perfect plan of salvation and, having this, nothing more is needed and nothing less will answer God's purpose.

The words of the apostle Paul, found at the head of this chapter, are inspired: hence it is safe to hold that all inspired Scripture is profitable to the man of God. Portions of it are doctrinal in their character, and these must be believed from the heart; other portions are disciplinary, and are profitable for reproof and correction, and must be accepted so that growth and development may result; while other portions are for teaching and instruction. These must be studied and taken into the heart and lived out in the life, so that the "man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." Completeness, fullness, perfection, and all-sufficiency are found only in the inspired Word of God.

In accepting the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice, proper distinction is to be made between what God says to us and what is spoken to and by others. Some of the words of the Book are addressed to a special class, the Jews, and some of the words were not spoken by God. That part of the Book which contains the plan of salvation, the sayings of Jesus Christ spoken to His disciples and the words of His inspired apostles, comes directly to us, and is to be accepted as a direct revelation from heaven. Here are to be found precept and example,

and these are to be obeyed and followed. No commandment, given us in the New Testament Scriptures, is to be set aside as being nonessential: in the atoning blood of Christ and in doing the commandments is to be found the only ground upon which salvation is promised. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. . . . Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

All laws made by ecclesiastical councils are to be set aside and God's Word accepted instead. The law enacted in the council chamber of heaven and revealed to us in the New Testament is to control the church of God. Conferences have a place only in devising means to carry out the principles embodied in heaven's laws and for the unification of God's people. When they go beyond this they usurp authority and must not be followed. The Roman Catholic hierarchy grounds the authority of the Scriptures on the church. This is an error of great magnitude, for the very reverse is true; the church is grounded on the authority of the Holy Scriptures, and by them only is the follower of Christ to be bound or loosed. Any attempt to change or supplement the Scriptures with deliverances of church councils is an unwarranted

assumption on the part of imperfect men, and must not be submitted to. Christ was dealing with human laws, made by the rabbis and the Jewish Sanhedrin, the great council of the Jews, when He said: "In vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrine the precepts of men."

From what has preceded we draw this general conclusion: The portion of the Bible directed to us contains the law of God concerning us. It is the only revelation from God to man; hence the Bible is the only authorized rule of faith and practice. It contains no more, nor less, than is needed for the salvation of the soul, and was given by God for this very purpose; and the promise of the forgiveness of sins and of eternal life rests upon the atoning blood of Christ, and obedience from the heart to all the commandments in the Bible given us to observe.

Those who accept the Bible as the Word of God may be divided into two classes, and these may be determined by the answers to the following questions: Why do we believe the Bible to be what we claim it to be, the Word of God? What is the ground of our faith? Numbers there are who believe the Bible because their pious, believing parents taught them from childhood that the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God. Thus from infancy they have believed the Bible, and have, with unquestioning faith and with pure devotion to God, obeyed its teachings.

Their faith has been strong enough to cause them to lead holy and pure lives, and to die the death of the righteous in the full hope of eternal life. Who will presume to condemn a faith of this kind?

Others, and their numbers are not so large as the first class, have investigated the ground of their faith; they have carefully examined the evidences of Christianity; they have, with great patience, investigated the abundant testimony given in favor of the credibility and authenticity of the Holy Scriptures; they have met and refuted the objections and arguments urged against the Christian religion and the Bible by unbelievers, and, after going over all the ground with the utmost care and painstaking, they are settled and fixed in their faith, because the very closest and most careful investigation proves, beyond all doubt, the truth of the Bible and gives a rock of impregnable defense against the unbeliever.

Under two heads may be classed all that has been said or written on the evidences of the truth of the Bible,—the external, or historical, and the internal evidences. Under the former head are classed all the facts relating to the Bible and its characters, the proofs of the fulfillment of prophecy, the miracles performed, the spreading of Christianity, the faith and devotion of the apostles and disciples of Christ, which led them to suffer persecution and martyrdom, the benefits growing out of the Christian religion

wherever it has been properly developed and its precepts faithfully observed.

The internal evidences are to be found in the doctrines of the Gospel, their pure and elevated morality, their adaptation to the wants of the souls of men, their benevolence, uprightness and the holy, elevated character of their Founder.

CHAPTER TWO.

A Brief Historical Sketch of The Old Testament.

For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.—Psa. 119: 89.

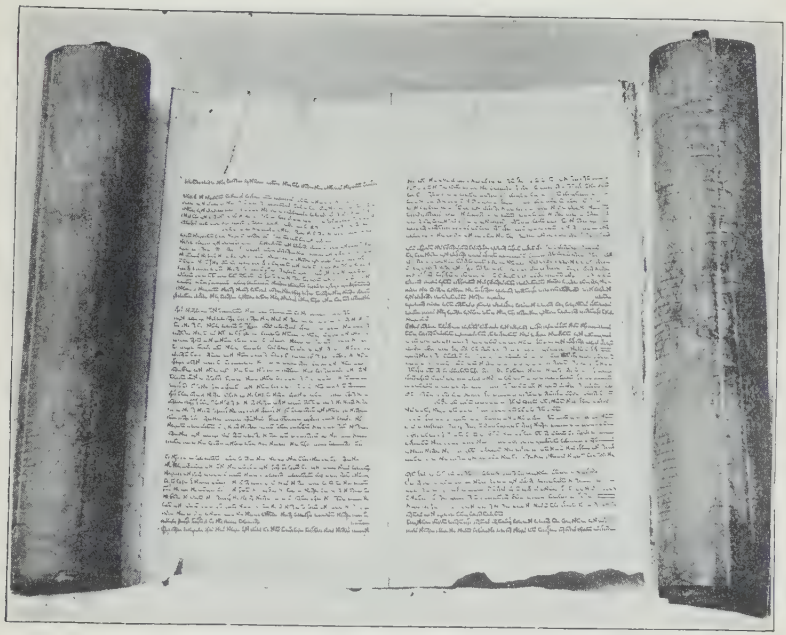
In the history of the Bible is to be found a strong argument in proof of its genuineness and credibility. The books of the Bible are genuine if they were written by the authors to whom they have been ascribed. But it is well to note that a book may be credible, or authentic, even if a mistake has been made as to its author. John Marshall is the reputed author of a life of George Washington. If it were ascertained that the book had really been written by some other intelligent, truthful friend of the Father of his Country, who had known him equally as well as did Marshall, the error as to the authorship would in no way affect the credibility or authenticity of the book. The quality of the truth remains unchanged, independent of authorship.

The Old Testament was originally written in the Hebrew, the language of the Jews. It was perpetuated by being copied by the scribes, whose lifework was to make copies of the Scriptures. Great care was taken in making copies, but occasionally an error crept in. This was sometimes occasioned by care-

lessness, sometimes by inserting in the text marginal notes and sometimes by misunderstanding when the writing was done by dictation. Here began the work of the Massoretes, the name given to an association of learned and devout Hebrews who made the original text the great object of their study, and whose sole aim was to preserve the Scriptures delivered to them by the fathers in as pure a state as possible. In order to do this the minutest rules were laid down and followed in making copies of the original manuscript. The verses, words and letters of the entire Bible were counted and numbered. A catalogue of the words left out by the scribes was made, and all of those were inserted. The letters were also carefully scrutinized and all omissions and erroneous insertions corrected. When copies were made the words and letters were all counted, and if found to agree with the original in number, the copy was thus far accepted. Then the placing of the letters and the spelling were most carefully examined and studied. Such was the care of the Massoretes that their text has stood the test of time, and what is known as the Massoretic text of the Old Testament is now accepted by all Hebrew scholars. It was used in the revision of the English Bible in 1884.

Until the time of Joshua the first five books of the Bible, known as the Pentateuch, a Greek word meaning the fivefold book, were all the known written

Book of God. It was written on carefully prepared skins of animals, known as parchment, and the five books of the law composed one continuous roll. The writing was done by the scribes and was begun and



Roll of the Law, in Possession of the Author.

completed, probably, in the days of the wandering in the wilderness. Other books were written and added to the Pentateuch until the list was, with the last addition of the prophecy of Malachi, completed four hundred and twenty years before the birth of

Christ. The length of time which elapsed between the writing of the Law and the last book of the Old Testament was one thousand and seventy years. Thus it took over one thousand years to complete the first part of the Bible.

About four hundred and twenty years before Christ, and forty years after the return of the Jews from Babylon under Ezra, the books of the Old Testament were collected into one book, and a completed list was made of the collection. This was done during the lives of the prophets Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. After the death of the last-named prophet the spirit of prophecy ceased. Josephus, speaking of the Old Testament, says that from that time down to his own day, A. D. 80, "no one dared to add, take away, or alter any thing." During the long period of time which elapsed while the books of the Old Testament were being written, the Hebrew underwent many marked changes. From this fact Dr. Osborne draws the following argument as to the genuineness and authenticity of the Book: Had the Bible been the work of an impostor he would have used the Hebrew known at the time he lived, his work would have contained the style, ideas and meanings of the time he wrote, and there would have been traces of the unity of style. But instead of this we find changes in style, new expressions, characteristic of the time when the particular book was written, peculiar additions, and the

use of words and letters, appearance of new idioms and grammatical forms from Genesis to the latest prophecies. These facts are certain signs of progressive ages, and are so characteristic of the language of the Old Testament that, to the Hebrew scholar of the present time, they indicate the age in which the book was written, and sometimes suggest the historic contents of the book composed in that style of Hebrew. The Hebrew itself frequently vindicates the genuineness and determines the age of the book. After careful examination of this ground, our author says: "It is impossible intelligently to believe any charges of forgery against the Hebrew originals."

The Massoretic manuscripts are divided into two classes. The first, regarded as holy, are the rolls used in the synagogues and are kept in the most holy place. As has already been seen, the greatest possible care and pains were taken in the transcription of these to guard against errors. They contain only the Pentateuch, with an occasional addition of the books of Ruth, Esther, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Lamentations and sections of the books of the prophets. It was from one of these holy rolls that our Lord was accustomed to read in the synagogues.

The second class of manuscripts are known as the common or private, and are written on parchment, paper, and are also printed and bound in book form.

The common manuscripts contain all the books of the Old Testament and are known as the greater Massora.

There are several versions of the Old Testament. A version of the Bible is a translation from the original into another language. After the dispersion of the Jews the Hebrew ceased to be spoken by all of them. It then became necessary to translate the Scriptures into different languages so that they might be read by the Israelites in all parts of the world. Several of the different versions are here named.

The Septuagint. A translation of the Old Testament into the Greek about B. C. 280. Josephus ascribes the work to seventy Jewish scholars, hence its name. This is, however, regarded as a tradition. It was made at Alexandria, Egypt, and was in use many years before the birth of Christ. The quotations in the New Testament were taken from the Septuagint version, showing that it was in general use in the time of our Lord

The Samaritan version is a translation of the Pentateuch into the Samaritan dialect. It was probably made in the second century before Christ. A very old copy of this version is to be seen at Nablous, the ancient Shechem, in Palestine. It belongs to the Samaritan community at that place and was recently offered for sale at Jerusalem.

The Syriac version, also called the Peshito, is a translation of the Bible into the common language of

Silver Case for Roll of the Law.

the people of Palestine. It was made in the second century of the Christian era, so that the Christians of Syria could have the Scriptures in their own tongue.

The Vulgate, meaning the common or current text of the Scripture, is a translation made by the most learned Christian scholar of his time, Jerome, who lived A. D. 331-420. Jerome's version of the Bible is still used by the Roman Catholic church.

In addition to the versions already named we have the *Targums,* a free rendering of the Old Testament into the Chaldaic Hebrew, made for the Babylonian Jews who by long residence in Babylon had partly lost their language. There was also a version made for the Armenians, one for the Goths, and still another for the church in Africa.

The Old Testament was the Scripture referred to and quoted from by our Savior and his apostles. With the exception of Ruth, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Songs of Solomon, Lamentations, Obadiah, Nahum and Zephaniah, all the books of the Old are quoted from in the New Testament. The Old Testament was held by Christ and His followers as the inspired Word of God. If we accept the New Testament as the inspired Gospel of Jesus Christ, all controversy as to the Old ceases, because it was accepted by Christ.

Like tracing a mighty river from its mouth to its source, so, historically, we trace the Bible from our

day back unerringly to the days of the prophets, when its books were first brought together and named by those men of God. From its source onward, as the centuries pass, it becomes a greater volume of truth until, rounded out and completed with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it floods the world in these last days with divine truth. Prior to the invention of printing, manuscript copies of the Bible were to be found in all the libraries of Europe and in the monasteries of the Orient. The revision of the English Bible, completed in 1884, involved the examination of as many as five thousand manuscripts of the Old and New Testaments, some of these dating back to the third century of the Christian era. Going still farther up the stream, we have the Targums and the various versions already referred to, taking us back to two hundred and eighty years before the birth of Christ, when the Septuagint was completed. And this points with absolute and unerring certainty to an earlier copy in the Hebrew from which the translation was made. It is fair to assume that this was the copy of the Sacred Scriptures of Ezra who lived in the fifth century before Christ. Thus, with unerring certainty and without a single break in the stream, we trace the Old Testament of our times back to the holy prophets of God who wrote and spoke "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

CHAPTER THREE.

Historical Sketch of the New Testament.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.—John 1: 1.

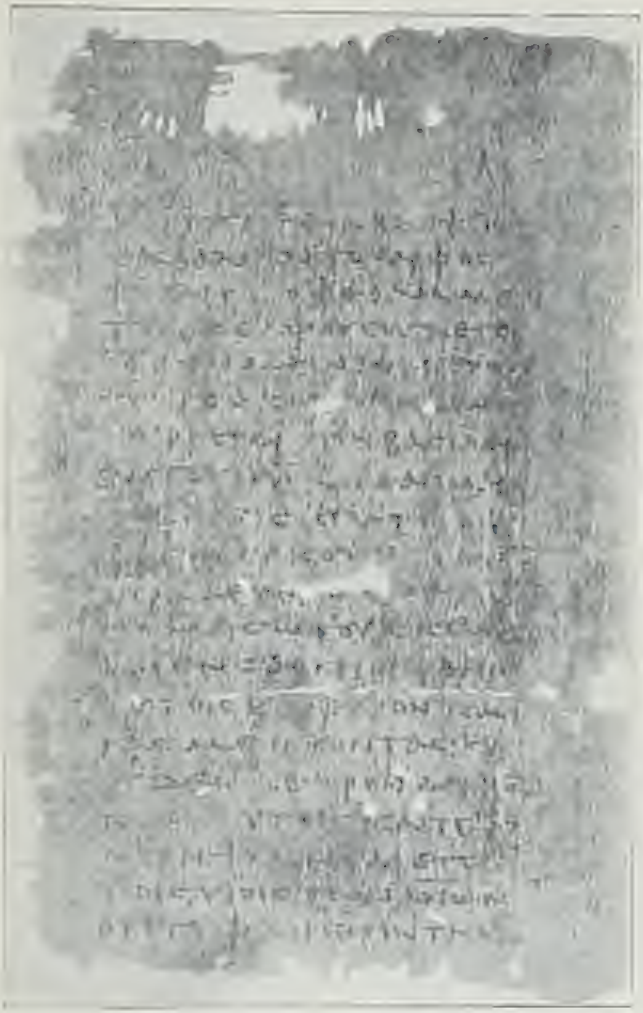
As we trace the Old Testament from the present day to the days of the prophets, so also the New Testament is traced to the days of the apostles with the same unerring certainty and without a missing link in the chain of testimony. Historically considered, the Book covers a period of about one hundred years; that is, from the birth of Christ to the close of the book of Revelation. Twenty-seven books, written by eight different authors between A. D. 40 and A. D. 96, make up the volume of the New Testament; its writings thus cover, in point of time, fifty-six years. The Gospel by Matthew, Eusebius says, was written about A. D. 40. Mark and Luke wrote A. D. 58-68, and John between A. D. 80 and 96. The epistles were written at various times from A. D. 60 to A. D. 96.

The external history of the New Testament, before the discovery of the art of printing, can be traced a thousand years by the manuscript copies. The manuscripts were originally written in Greek. The first, or autograph, copies of the different books very early disappeared. They were written on papyrus,[1] and,

[1] 2 John, verse 12.

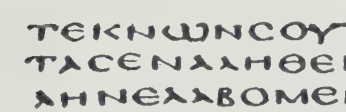
owing to the perishable nature of the material, were easily broken and destroyed. Fragments of New Testament papyri have recently been discovered, and these reveal the fate of many ancient copies, which, if they had been preserved, would be of incalculable value. Those that have been discovered had been used but little; indeed most of them were found in ancient tombs and had probably not been used at all. Recently a very important find of New Testament papyri was made at Oxyrynchus, Egypt. The photogravure on next page was taken from one of these papyri known as the "Sayings of Jesus." At the same place was discovered another fragment containing a large part of the first chapter of Matthew. These words appear, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." The date of these most important documents is given by experts as A. D. 150-200, and they carry the record of the written Gospel back to the time of Polycarp who sat at the feet of John the beloved disciple. Prior to these ancient papyri there must have been older copies of the Gospels from which these were made.

The use of parchment prevailed from the fourth to the eleventh century, when it was superseded by paper made first of cotton and later of linen. Owing to the great scarcity of writing material, often the old skins were re-used by washing off or erasing the original



"Sayings of Jesus"

writing, and most unfortunately it often happened that it was a biblical manuscript that was used in this way. Thus many priceless manuscript copies of the New Testament were lost. By the use of chemicals, however, in some cases the original writings have been recovered in modern times. Such manuscripts are known as palimpsests. Of these the most famous is the Codex Ephraemi, written in the fifth, and erased and rewritten in the twelfth century (the word codex means manuscript) by a scribe named Ephraem. He used a biblical manuscript upon which to write a treatise of his own. The original writing was restored by



Greek Uncial (Cod. Alex.), 5th century.

(τεκνων σου περιπατουν
τας εν αληθεια καθως εντο
λην ελαβομεν απο του π[ατ]ρ[ο]ς.—2 John 4.)

Tischendorf. There are about one thousand known manuscripts of the New Testament. About thirty of these contain all the books of the New Testament, the rest being more or less fragmentary in their character. They are divided, according to the style in which they are written, into two classes: uncial and cursive.

The Uncial Manuscripts. These are written in capitals, without any division into words or sentences

and with but few punctuation marks. The translators had a very difficult task before them in reading and translating the uncial writings. The engraving of the uncial writing taken from the Codex Alexandrinus will make the difficulties apparent to the reader.

The oldest and most valuable of the New Testament manuscripts of this character, now known to exist, is called the Codex Sinaiticus. It was discovered by Tischendorf in 1859 in the convent of St. Catharine at Mount Sinai.

A brief account of this most valuable discovery will be read with interest and profit. May 12, 1844, Tischendorf left Cairo, Egypt, for Mount Sinai. Crossing the desert he reached the sacred mountain the twenty-fourth of the same month, and was received and entertained by the monks of the convent. While searching the library, he discovered in the corner of the room a box used for rubbish, in which he noticed some leaves of parchment. These proved to be a part of the now famous copy of the Scriptures, but he was able to find at that time only a few leaves. In 1854 he made another trip to Sinai, but failed to discover the coveted treasure. Finally, in 1859, fifteen years after he made his first trip, Tischendorf gained from the Russian government financial aid and moral support, which enabled him to visit Sinai again. He reached the convent Jan. 31, 1859, and began his

search for the missing leaves; but he searched in vain, until the afternoon of Feb. 4, when the steward of the monastery called his attention to a manuscript which he had laid away. To the great joy of the German scholar it proved to be the missing manuscript,—an entire copy of the New Testament and a part of the Old. His long search was rewarded. After many perplexities and great difficulties he was enabled to make a copy of the manuscript, and finally succeeded in placing the original in the library at St. Petersburg, Russia, where it still remains. We now have a number of photographic copies of the original.

The Codex Sinaiticus contains twenty-six books of the Old Testament, all of the New, and the epistles of Barnabas, with a part of the epistle of Hermas. It is justly regarded by scholars as the most important manuscript copy of the New Testament now known to exist. Tischendorf rendered valuable service to Christianity by his discovery, and by his persistent efforts to secure this copy of the Scriptures. His name will be associated with the New Testament until the end shall come.

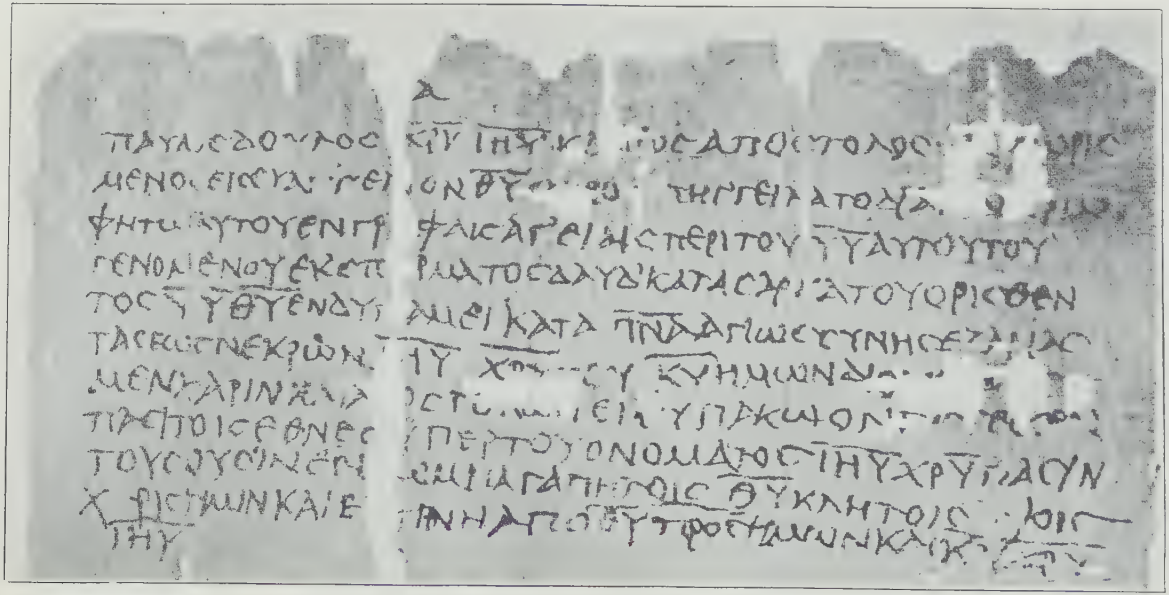
The Vatican Codex in the Vatican library at Rome and the Codex Alexandrinus in the British Museum, London, stand next to the Sinai manuscript in importance. The Alexandrian copy is written on fine vellum in uncial letters, and is without accents, or marks

of aspiration or marks between the words. It belonged as early as 1098 to the library in Constantinople. In 1628 it was presented to Charles the First, King of England, by Cyrillus Lucaris, patriarch of Constantinople, who declared that he had received it from Egypt where, in all probability, it was written. The Vatican manuscript is also of great value. It was written on fine, thin vellum in beautifully formed letters and contains the New Testament to Hebrews 9: 14. It has been in the Vatican library for about three hundred years.

The Cursive Manuscripts, so called because they are written in a running hand, are quite numerous and some of them are of great value. The running hand in writing appears to have come into use in the tenth century. The words are run together as in the case of the uncials. By a careful examination of the material upon which it is written, the character of the writing, and the punctuation, it is possible to tell with considerable accuracy the time to which any manuscript belongs.

In the most ancient manuscripts the order of the books of the New Testament is as follows: the four Gospels, the Pauline epistles, the book of Acts, the general epistles and Revelation. From this order there is some variation as to the epistles.

Eusebius, the father of church history and Bishop of Cæsarea, prepared by order of the Roman Em-



Beginning of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, the Oldest known Text of that Apostle (316 A. D.).

peror, Constantine the Great, fifty copies of the Sacred Scriptures about A. D. 330. The historian was a warm personal friend of the Emperor and was held in high esteem by him. The Bishop says: "Ever careful for the welfare of the churches of God, the Emperor addressed me personally in a letter on the means of providing copies of the Inspired Oracles. His letter, which related to the providing of copies of the Scriptures for reading in the churches, was to the following purport:

"'Victor Constantine, Maximus Augustus, to Eusebius:

"'It happens, through the favoring of God our Savior, that great numbers have united themselves to the most Holy Church in the City that is called by my name. It seems, therefore, highly requisite, since that city is rapidly advancing in prosperity in all other respects, that the number of churches should also be increased. Do you therefore receive with all readiness my determination on this behalf. I have thought it expedient to instruct your prudence to order fifty copies of the Sacred Scriptures, the provision and use of which you know to be most needful for the instruction of the church, to be written on prepared parchment, in a legible manner, and in a commodious and portable form, by transcribers thoroughly practiced in their art. The procurator of the

diocese has also received instruction by letter from our clemency to be careful to furnish all things necessary for the preparation of such copies; and it will be for you to take special care that they be completed with as little delay as possible. You have authority also, in virtue of this letter, to use two of the public carriages for their conveyance, by which arrangement the copies, when fairly written, will most easily be forwarded for my personal inspection; and one of the deacons of your church may be intrusted with this service, who, on his arrival here, shall experience my liberality. God preserve you, my beloved brother.' "

Upon receiving the Emperor's commands the Bishop at once set about having them carried into effect. In due course of time there were sent him fifty copies of the Scriptures in magnificent and elaborate volumes of a threefold and fourfold form. This fact is attested by a letter sent to Eusebius by the Emperor acknowledging the receipt of the books.

Here we have an account of the preparation of fifty copies of the Scriptures, three hundred years after they were written. This shows that as early as A. D. 306 the Scriptures existed in manuscript form, and that no doubt was entertained by Constantine as to their genuineness and authenticity. Tischendorf was of the opinion that the valuable copy discovered by him at Mount Sinai was one of the copies ordered

by the Roman Emperor, and that it was presented to the monastery by its founder, Justinian.

In addition to the manuscript copies of the New Testament written on parchment and papyrus dating back, probably, to A. D. 150, we have various versions of the Book as early in date as the manuscript copies. A version differs from a manuscript in this, that the latter always means a copy in the original language, while the former is a translation from the original into some other tongue. A version is proof positive that the original was not only in existence when the translation was made, but that it had assumed sufficient importance to justify the great labor necessary to turn it into other languages. Such was the case with our New Testament. In the early centuries versions appeared in the Syriac, the Latin, the Egyptian or Coptic, the Arabic and other tongues. The Syriac was in common use among the Eastern churches, while the Latin became the Bible language of the Western churches. As already indicated, there is strong evidence in favor of dating the last two versions as early as A. D. 150, or fifty years after the death of John whom Jesus loved.

Thus from our own time, link by link, we trace the Gospel of Jesus back to the days of the apostles. Indeed we may say that a chain of two links binds the first and the twentieth centuries together. The printed Bible takes us back to the fifteenth, and the

manuscripts back to the middle of the second century. The quotations from the Gospels made by the church fathers, which will be considered in another chapter, and the early versions are side testimonies adding strength to the two-linked chain of evidences. We may thank God that He has not left us without witnesses to verify the genuineness and the credibility of His Holy Book, that amid the turmoil, the strife and the wasting wars of the centuries the Gospel comes down to us as it was delivered unto the apostles by Him who spake as never man spake.

CHAPTER FOUR.

The English Bible.

Ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe.—Acts 15: 7.

Because of its general interest to the Bible student, a brief sketch is given of our English Bible, the beginnings of which are found in the earliest attempts to translate it into the Anglo-Saxon. The first effort in this direction was made by Cædmon, a monk of Whitby. He did not attempt a translation, but composed a poetical treatise on some portions of the Bible. He died A. D. 680, and was followed by Adhelm, the first bishop of Sherbourne, who translated the Psalms. Egbert gave to the Anglo-Saxon world portions of the four Gospels, and then came Bede, the greatest scholar of his age. He died A. D. 735 while engaged in the translation of the Gospel by St. John. He had completed five chapters and was engaged on the sixth when death suddenly closed his labors in this world. Both Alfred the Great and Ælfric translated portions of the Bible in the tenth century. King Alfred's object was to make the laws of Moses the basis of the judicial system of his kingdom.

But it is to John Wycliffe, "the morning star of the reformation," that we are indebted for the first

English translation of the Bible. This great work was completed about A. D. 1380 and marks an epoch in the history of the Bible. The translation was made from the Vulgate, and but few copies in manuscript were issued. But the work was started, and such has been the demand for the English Bible that not less than two hundred million copies were printed in English during the nineteenth century.

The discovery of printing by Gutenberg, 1450-55, was of the greatest advantage to the Scriptures. The first book issued from the press was a Latin Bible. Thus the press, which has become one of the great world powers, was at first dedicated to the printing of God's Holy Book.

Wycliffe's version was soon followed by other translations of the Bible. To William Tyndale is due the credit of having been the first to give to the world a printed translation of the entire Scriptures. Soon after completing this great and important task his body was burned at the stake in a religious persecution, October 6, 1536.

Coverdale and Rogers, both personal friends of the martyred Tyndale, made translations and compilations of the Bible based on the work of their friend. Later appeared the Geneva, the Bishop's, and the Douay Bibles, the latter the Roman Catholic Bible, these being the most noted translations prior to the appearance of the Authorized Version, also called the King

James Version, although he had nothing to do with it except to appoint the fifty-four eminent scholars who did the work and published the results of their labors in 1611. The Authorized Version has since then been accepted and used by all English-speaking Protestants in the world.

The Revised Version, published in 1881-85, is the result of the labors of a commission of English and American scholars, forty-one in number, representing the best scholarship of the time. The work is highly prized by all Bible students, but has not yet come into popular use.

Punctuation marks, and the division of the Scriptures into chapters and verses, were first introduced to aid in the study of the Word. The Gospels were divided into chapters, first by Ammonius of Alexandria A. D. 220, then came a similar division of all the books of the New Testament; but the work was not fully completed until about A. D. 500. The division of the entire book into chapters was not made until the thirteenth century, the work having been accomplished by Cardinal Hugo de St. Caro, who died A. D. 1263. The division of the New Testament into verses was introduced by Robert Stevens in his Greek Testament in A. D. 1551. Four years later he issued the entire Bible divided into verses. The faulty character of his work has been clearly shown by the Revised Scriptures, but it has been

a great help to the study of the Bible. It was doubtless due to the omission of this verse division of the Scriptures that the Revised Version did not meet with a more ready acceptance when it was published in 1884.

CHAPTER FIVE.

The Antiquity and Genuineness of the Bible.

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.—John 17: 17.

As has been set forth in preceding chapters, the Bible is not a book of recent date or modern origin, neither is it an idle tale of modern times told for the diversion of its readers. Its antiquity is based on indisputable evidence, and only the densely ignorant doubt its great age. Those who have examined the history of the Bible, and have weighed the great mass of evidence offered in proof of its claim to antiquity, have not the least doubt of its great age. Even scoffing unbelievers, who are at all informed on the subject, admit that the Bible is an ancient book. Ingersoll, who wrote about the supposed mistakes of Moses, believed that the great Jewish lawgiver lived and wrote and labored more than three thousand years ago.

All through the ages of its existence the Bible has had its witnesses and guardians, though some of them have been the greatest perverters of Christian doctrine and the bitterest enemies of the Christian faith. The Old Testament, containing the most of the prophecies, as has already been noted, was preserved with the most religious care by the Jews.

To them it was a Sacred Holy Book. It contained their code of laws given amid the thunders of Sinai, their history from the call of Abraham to the close of the prophetical age, their psalms and hymns and songs of praise, the record of the lives of their great men and women, the sayings and exhortations to godliness of their wise and holy men and the prophecies which unveiled to them, in a measure, the unknown future. Add to these weighty reasons for preserving the Book intact the fact that they believed that the Old Testament contained the inspired Word of God concerning them, and we have the strongest possible motive on their part for handing down the Holy Scriptures in unchanged form from generation to generation. And while the Jews were responsible for the crucifixion of Christ and made the most determined efforts, in vain however, to stamp out Christianity in its infancy, and were its most bitter enemies and persecutors for many years, yet they preserved with the utmost care the Old Testament Scriptures, which testify of Christ, as they were delivered to them. They were read on the Sabbath day in all their synagogues, beginning long before the birth of Christ and continuing down to the present time. Multiplied copies of the law and the prophets, and of the New Testament were transcribed with the utmost care and in the most painstaking manner by men set apart for the work because of

their great skill as scribes, and such was the care to have the copy exactly like the original that a single error was sufficient to condemn the writing and a new copy had to be made. And now in these later days millions and tens of millions of copies of the Bible are printed in all the known languages of the world.

As already observed, we are able to trace the New Testament, through printed and manuscript copies, back to the middle of the second century, and thence to the days of the apostles by the very strongest presumptive testimony. Such is the character of the evidence that it removes all doubt of the genuineness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Briefly we look at the evidence of the genuineness of the Gospel, and it will be found that it is of the same character as that which satisfies us of the genuineness of the writings of Josephus, the orations of Cicero, the commentaries of Cæsar, the "Biblical Antiquities" of Bingham, and of other writings both ancient and modern. When a book is accepted and quoted from as genuine by those who lived at, or near about, the time of its publication, all doubt is removed as to its genuineness in the minds of those who accepted and quoted from it. If the book were believed to be spurious when published, the fact could not be concealed, and no one would accept and quote from it if such were the case.

In a succeeding chapter of this book quotations are made from Keith on the prophecies. He wrote more than half a century ago. The writer never saw him and but few who read these pages ever met the distinguished author, and yet no one doubts the genuineness of Keith's writings. The fact that they are quoted from now is an evidence that they are genuine.

All Bible students are acquainted with Dr. Thomson's "Land and Book." In it is found a quotation from the writings of Seawulf, a traveler of ancient times. The quotation proves, beyond all doubt, that the book from which it was made was in existence when it was quoted from. But suppose the first edition of Seawulf's writings had been destroyed, would not the quotations prove that the book, as known in later editions, existed in the earlier one? Surely this would be proof of the most positive kind.

The writings of Celsus, the bitter opponent of Christianity who wrote in the second century, are known only to us by quotations made from them by Origen in his noted reply in refutation of this attack on the Christian religion. But no one doubts that Celsus lived and wrote the book from which the antenicene fathers quoted. Keim, a German author, made an effort to reconstruct the writings of Celsus from quotations made by Origen. So with the New Testament. Quotations were made from its various books

soon after it was published, and the writings of the authors who quoted from the copies of the Scriptures have come down to us and the quotations agree with the New Testament as we now have it. The conclusion is placed beyond all doubt. The books of the New Testament quoted from were in existence, and accepted as genuine and authentic when the quotations were made.

Taking our stand at the close of the first and in the early part of the second centuries of our era, we examine the quotations made from the Gospels. The epistle of Barnabas, so-called (there is some doubt as to the authorship), was written not later than A. D. 120. It is quoted from by Clement of Alexandria, A. D. 194, by Origen thirty-six years later, and is referred to by both Eusebius and Jerome in the fourth century as an ancient work. In it appear these words: "Let us therefore beware lest it come upon us as it is written, 'There are many called, few chosen.'" From this quotation we draw the safe conclusion that in the year A. D. 120, when this epistle was written, there was a book extant, well known to Christians and accepted by them as genuine and authentic, and of great authority among them containing these words:

"Many are called, few chosen."

Such a book is our present Gospel by Matthew, in

which the text is twice[1] found. And these words are found in no other book prior to the time when the quotation was made. It is worthy of note that the author uses the words, "It is written," the very phrase invariably used by the Jews when referring to the Scriptures. Christ uses the same words in His temptation, "It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." In this same epistle of Barnabas many passages are quoted from Matthew. Among others, "Give to every one that asketh," "He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."[2] The author of the epistle under consideration quoted from the Gospel of Matthew just as surely as Origen quoted from Celsus, Dr. Thomson from Seawulf and the writer from Keith.

We are in possession of an epistle attributed to Clement, bishop of Rome, written in the beginning of the second century, who, some ancient writers assert, was the Clement to whom Paul refers in Philpp. 4: 3. This epistle is frequently spoken of by the apostolic fathers and acknowledged as authority by all. Irenæus says: "It was written by Clement, who had seen the blessed apostles and conversed with them; who had the preaching of the apostles still sounding in his ears and their traditions before his eyes." The epistle is addressed to the church at Corinth, and Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, was wit-

[1] Matt. 20: 16; 22: 14. [2] Matt. 5: 42; 9: 13.

ness, A. D. 170, that the epistle of Clement had been wont to be read in all the churches from ancient times. Clement, in this epistle, about the close of the first century, quotes largely from the Gospels. Among others, the epistle contains the following valuable passages: "Especially remembering the words of the Lord Jesus which He spoke, teaching gentleness and long-suffering, for thus He spake: 'Be ye merciful that ye may obtain mercy; forgive that it may be forgiven you; as ye judge, so shall ye be judged; as ye are kind, so shall kindness be shown unto you; with what measure ye mete, with the same it shall be measured unto you.'" Again, "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, for He said: 'Woe to that man by whom offenses come; it were better for him that he had not been born, than that he should offend one of my elect; it were better for him that a millstone should be tied about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the sea, than that he should offend one of my little ones!'"[1] Here are quotations taken from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke by an author who lived among the apostles and knew them personally. In quoting from the Gospel, he gives it as a matter about which there was no doubt or controversy. Again the only conclusion is that when Clement wrote, A. D. 98, he quoted from a

[1] Apostolic Fathers, Edinburgh Edition, chap. 13, page 16; compare also Matt. 6: 12-15; 7: 2 and Luke 6: 36-38.

copy of the Gospels by Matthew and Luke, and that such a book was in existence at that time.

Following Clement, we have Hermas named by Paul; Ignatius, bishop of the church of Antioch, thirty-seven years after Christ's ascension; Polycarp, bishop of the church at Smyrna, who sat at the feet of John the apostle and was burned at the stake A. D. 155; then, twenty years later, Justin Martyr, one of the most able defenders of the Christian faith in the early days of the primitive church. He was born about the close of the first century at Shechem, in Palestine. He was a follower of Plato and his school of Greek philosophy, but an aged Christian pointed out to him the way of salvation. He accepted Christ and became an able defender of the truth. He suffered martyrdom A. D. 166 in the reign of Marcus Aurelius. He wrote a strong defense of Christianity A. D. 148. He refers to the Gospels as the "Memoirs of the Apostles" and draws from them his account of the life and teachings of Jesus. He also calls them the Gospels and quotes from them saying that they were read in the religious services of the Christians both in the city and in the country. That Justin Martyr accepted the Gospels is proven by the fact that his pupil, Tatian, combined these four in a simple narrative and called it the Diatessaron, or Gospel of the Four.

Irenæus was one among the great leaders and writ-

ers of the primitive church during the last half of the second century. He was born in Asia Minor about A. D. 115 and became bishop of Lyons A. D. 177, succeeding Pothonius who attained to the great age of ninety years. Irenæus spent the early years of his life in Asia Minor and well remembered the martyred Polycarp. He says of him: "Whom we also saw in our early years, for he remained a very long time, and at a great age was put to death testifying gloriously." Besides his acquaintance with Polycarp, Irenæus knew many of the elders who had been learners and ministers under those who had been taught by the apostles, and many of them had seen the apostles themselves, and thus had opportunity of knowing those things commonly believed and accepted by the apostolic church. He wrote extensively in the Greek, directing his works against the prevalent heresies of the time.

In his writings Irenæus speaks of the four Gospels as received by all the churches and received exclusively by them. His writings give the most positive evidence that in his time, and in the time of those he knew, there was no doubt as to the genuineness of the Gospels, and his testimony would take us back through his contemporaries to the days of the apostles. He says: "We have not received the knowledge of the way of our salvation by any other than those by whom the Gospel was brought

to us, which Gospel they first preached and afterwards by the will of God committed to writing that it might be for time to come the foundation and pillar of our faith. For after that our Lord rose from the dead, and they, the apostles, were endowed from above with the power of the Holy Ghost coming down upon them, they received a perfect knowledge of all things; Matthew, then among the Jews, wrote a Gospel in their own language, while Peter and Paul were preaching the Gospel at Rome and founding a church there; and after their exit, Mark, also the disciple and interpreter of Peter, delivered to us in writings the things that had been preached by Peter; and Luke, the companion of Paul, put down in a book the Gospel preached by Paul. Afterward John, the disciple of the Lord, who also leaned upon his breast, likewise published a Gospel while he dwelt at Ephesus." Irenæus also gives us the information that John reached an advanced age, and that he did not die until after Trajan became emperor of Rome, A. D. 98.

Other testimony as to the exclusive use of the four Gospels among the primitive churches as the only authority and as the accepted teaching of Jesus is given by many other distinguished teachers and elders. Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian both wrote in the third century. The former refers to the "four Gospels," and the latter asserts that the four Gos-

pels have existed from the very beginning of the churches and are coeval with them.

Thus we trace the Gospels from the apostolic days to the third century, when even unbelievers admit that they existed as they have come down to us. And here we might rest the case, but we give some testimony from unbelievers.

Celsus, a most bitter opponent of the Christian religion, to whom reference has already been made,[1] makes more than eighty quotations from the New Testament. His whole argument proceeds upon the concession that the book he quoted from was in existence, that it was accepted as genuine and was held as the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Had it been otherwise, how quickly and how gladly would this bitter opponent of Christianity have attacked the authenticity of the New Testament Scriptures. The evidence of this Grecian philosopher and worshiper of the false gods of the Greeks is of the utmost importance. Seventy-eight years after the death of the beloved apostle John, he wrote and quoted from the New Testament as an authentic book.

Porphyry wrote A. D. 271 and was the most bitter and formidable foe and opponent of Christianity in his time. In his writings he refers to Matthew, John, Acts and Galatians, and there is no trace of suspicion in his writings that the books were spu-

[1] See page 50.

rious. He held them to be what they purported to be,—the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Had there been the least shadow of a doubt as to this, he would at once have attacked them at that point, for he did attack the book of Daniel concerning the prophecy of the coming of Christ.

Hierocles wrote A. D. 303. He was president of Bithynia and a cruel persecutor of the Christians. His writings are full of sarcasm, but he concedes the genuineness of the Gospels and seeks for contradictions, by which he aims to show that they are not inspired. He refers to six of the eight authors of the New Testament.

The facts here given are so conclusive of the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament that no one who examines them carefully can doubt. The quotations made by writers in the first and second centuries show conclusively that the Gospel was then written and existed in the form of a book, that it was held in high authority by all believers, and was quoted from as an end to all controversy, and that the later copies, dating from A. D. 325, to which we now have access, are exact reproductions of the original. The invaluable testimony of pagan writers, who bitterly opposed the introduction of Christianity, also shows that when they wrote the Sacred Book was in existence, and that it was held to be the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The entire line of ev-

idence here given traces the New Testament, with unerring certainty, back to the days of the apostles when the Book was written.

In closing this chapter reference is made to the attack on the genuineness of the Gospel according to John. The beloved apostle lays peculiar emphasis upon the divinity of Christ, the union in His person of the divine and human natures, the office of the Holy Ghost and the love of God. Doubtless for these reasons the destructive critics have so persistently and furiously attacked the genuineness of John's Gospel. They have attributed it to some of the elders of the second century, and in every possible way have tried to show that it was not written by John. But, as Farrar truthfully says, the objections have been met, point by point, and nothing can invalidate the mass of external and internal evidence in its favor.

Recently there has been discovered the most interesting and conclusive evidence of the genuineness of John's Gospel in Tatian's Diatessaron. The document is a harmony of the four Gospels, written about the year A. D. 150 by a scholar named Tatian. It gives the most conclusive evidence that John's Gospel was well known before Tatian wrote and that when he wrote his harmony there was not the slightest doubt as to its genuineness. If there had been

he would not have included it in his harmony, where it stands with the same authority as the Gospels written by Matthew, Mark and Luke. The early writers among the church fathers frequently refer to the Diatessaron, but until the last score of years no copies of it were known to exist, and the critics were not slow to say that Tatian and his writings were apocryphal.

In the Vatican library at Rome an old manuscript was discovered to be palimpsest, that is, as already explained, one text written over another, and the earlier writing was found to be a copy of the Diatessaron written in the Arabic. Another copy was also discovered in Egypt, so that now we have two copies of Tatian's work. While it is not regarded as having great value as a harmony of the Gospels, yet it does settle most conclusively the genuineness of the Gospel according to St. John, and completely demolishes the contention of the critics. Thus the God of all truth, in His own time and way, preserves and gives us evidences of the truth of His Word.

As Dr. Storrs says, "Whatever particular criticism may be made concerning writings or portions of writings in the Scriptures, as to their authority, as to their proper place in the sacred canon, as to the authorship of them, as to the time at which they were written, these criticisms or critical inquiries no

more touch the substance of the Scripture than a minute botanical analysis touches the splendor of gardens or the grandeur of forests, or than the deep-sea soundings efface the blue from the surface of the ocean, or stay the swing of its tremendous tides."

CHAPTER SIX.

The Word of Prophecy.

Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.—2 Peter 1: 21.

The truths of the Book of God rest for confirmation, not alone on the evidences of its genuineness and credibility, for God has not left his people without many witnesses of the inspiration of the Bible, and we are glad to know that the evidences here are just as strong and convincing as those already given in these pages. Upon fulfilled prophecy we may base our claims that the Book is of divine origin, and that its precepts and commands are of supreme obligation to us. Fulfilled prophecy is a miracle in itself. It is the seal of inspiration on God's Book, for only the divine and omniscient Creator of all things can put aside the veil of the future and foretell events that are surely to come to pass. Prophecy surely and unmistakably points out the hand of God in history. What seems to us a conflict, full of apparent discord and disorder, is seen, in the light of fulfilled prophecy and history, to be, as a whole, a grand and harmonious plan, in which the hand of the Almighty Controller of events is constantly visible, and from which is entirely eliminated every element of disorder.

What is prophecy? Let us seek a definition that will make the meaning of the word plain. That prophecy came not by the will of man is a statement readily admitted by all, and it is equally true that it does come from God. No man, unaided by divine power, can look into the future and foretell what is to come to pass. Nothing is more surely settled than that what the future has in store for us is closed to human knowledge. It is the sealed book that the human mind cannot open. Some things about the future we may and do know. God's laws bring about certain results, and these, by our own experience and that of others, we may learn to know. But this is not prophecy. Guesses we may make, and, by discerning the face of the sky and studying the laws governing the changes of weather, we may predict with some degree of certainty what the morrow shall bring to us in rain, sunshine, or storms; but this is not prophecy. The modern fortune tellers,—to be found in our towns and cities and among the wandering gypsies in the country,—with some knowledge of human nature, make shrewd guesses and extract the silver coins from their dupes; but they know nothing of the future. They can guess, and so can any of us; but guessing, even if it should hit, is as far removed from prophecy as the east is from the west. We may, to some extent, judge the future by the past, and with an accurate knowledge of human affairs, we may, with some

degree of certainty, arrive at conclusions as to what the future will bring forth.

History repeats itself and like causes produce like results. If we see certain forces at work, we can say what the result will be. If we see a wooden building on fire we know that unless the fire is extinguished the structure will be consumed. We may say, with a considerable degree of certainty, that in the northern part of the United States we shall have snow and cold and freezing weather the coming winter and that we shall have warm weather during the summer months. But this is only judging the future by the past, and does not have in it a single element of prophecy. The disclosing of future events,—prophecy, in its true meaning,—belongs alone to God, and the words of inspiration state a fact in the language quoted, "Prophecy comes not by the will of man."

But what is prophecy? The apostle says: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Prophecy is God's omniscience, given to us through the instrumentality of holy men. A prophet must be a holy man of God, and his words must be dictated by the Holy Spirit. He must speak not for himself, but for God. He becomes, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, the mouthpiece of God, and speaks with the authority of heaven. God alone is omniscient, and He alone knows what the centuries to come will bring forth. He alone can unveil

futurity and show His servants the things that are to be and that must come to pass. Prophecy, then, comes from God to holy men moved upon by the Divine Spirit.

In more fully answering the question, What is prophecy? Dr. Pierson's definition is given. First, it must be such an unveiling of the future that no human foresight, wisdom, or sagacity, could have guessed it. Human beings sometimes exhibit remarkable foresight and forecast, when no supernatural element exists. A statesman may discover elements of corruption which may lead him to predict the overthrow of a nation within a given time. Comparison of the records of a series of years enables a weather prophet to foretell storms, and even comparative healthfulness of seasons. But back of this lies simply an induction from facts and principles.

Second, the predictions must deal in details sufficiently to exclude shrewd guesswork. General statements may be made with often a remarkable forecast of events; but every definite, specific detail or description adds to the improbability of its being an uninspired utterance, until the improbability becomes impossibility.

Third, there must be such a lapse of time, between prophecy and fulfillment, as to preclude the agency of the prophet himself in effecting or affecting the result. Otherwise the author of the prediction might, by se-

cret, subtle means, bring about apparent accomplishment.

These tests, applied to human guessing, will show how far man's predictions fall below the divine power of prophecy. It is to tests of this kind that the prophecies of the Bible can be submitted, and they more than meet all the requirements. We base our faith in the inspiration of the Bible, not upon one or two, but upon a vast number of prophecies giving detail after detail, and covering periods of more than a thousand years in their fulfillment.

There are more than fifteen hundred prophecies in the Bible, covering a large range of subjects. Of these nearly seven hundred pertain to particular events, —such as the destruction of Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, Sidon, Jerusalem, the cities of Egypt and the desolation of different lands and countries. A careful investigation shows that a large number of these prophecies have been fulfilled in the minutest detail. So remarkable has been the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Bible concerning the ancient cities and countries that one scarcely needs to read more than the prophecy to become acquainted with the history of the places which were made the subject of prophecy. Surely in these cases one may say that prophecy is history and history is fulfilled prophecy.

Jew of Jerusalem.

CHAPTER SEVEN.

Prophecies Concerning God's Chosen People.

For lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.—Amos 9: 9.

It is related of Frederick the Great that on one occasion turning to his marshal, who was a devout believer in the Bible, he said to him: "Give me, in one word, a proof of the truth of the Bible." "The Jews," was the short, unanswerable reply.

A better answer to the question of the great German conqueror could not have been given. This most singular race of people have dominated the world's history for thousands of years. Thirty-two hundred years ago we find them on the Sinaitic desert a band of liberated slaves escaping from Egyptian bondage in which they had been held for a long time. Forty years of wandering in the wilderness gave their great lawgiver Moses opportunity to warn them of the calamities and evils that would come upon them if they forgot God and wandered into sin and iniquity. The Ruler of all nations has dealt with no other people as He has with the Israelites. From Moses to Malachi the Jews were made the constant theme of prophecy, and remakable it is, notwithstanding the fact that very many of the predictions concerning them showed the

terrible fate in store for them, that they preserved all these prophecies with the greatest religious care. To read the prophecies concerning these people is to read, in a condensed form, a full and complete history of the Jews. Here, more than in any other known instance, it may be truthfully said that history is fulfilled prophecy. One author says: "The retrospect of the history of the Jews, since their dispersion, could not, at the present day, be drawn in truer terms than in the unpropitious auguries of their prophet above three thousand two hundred years ago. In the most ancient of all records, we read the lively representation of the present condition of the most singular people upon the earth." A millennium and a half of years these people were made the subject of numerous predictions by the prophets, the details of which may be numbered by the score, and in no other nation of the earth is to be found the fulfillment of a single one of these predictions.

Nearly two thousand years ago the Romans came upon them with the strength and ferocity of eagles and took away their place and nation. Including the destruction of Jerusalem, and their final struggle for national existence, in a flame of insurrection fanned among the dying embers of a once mighty race, which occurred a few years later, nearly a million and a half of the seed of Abraham fell under the edge of the sword. In their last expiring death struggle they

saw their towns and cities razed to the earth and their beloved country irretrievably ruined. The land which had been given to their fathers two thousand years before was wrenched from their grasp, their sons and daughters were sold into a slavery worse than death, and the remnant of their people were dispersed among all the nations of the earth. And yet, after passing through the greatest calamities that ever came upon any nation, these remarkable people have kept intact all their race peculiarities, their religion and their faith, and they are to-day a separate and distinct people from all other nations, as they have been for forty centuries. The Egyptians who enslaved them, the Assyrians who first carried them into captivity, the Romans who finally destroyed their nationality and country, great nations as they were, have all passed away, and you may search in vain for even a remnant of these at one time great world powers. The Israelite has outlived them all and is to-day the greatest living witness of the truth of the Bible in the world.

To enumerate, even in the briefest possible manner, all the predictions concerning Israel and their full completion in the history of this remarkable people, would be to extend this book far beyond its prescribed limits. At most only a few selections can be given. The richness of the field, and the abundance of the material, makes the selection a difficult task. Only such prophecies will be given as will best subserve the purpose of

the present work, and these are given with the hope that in them the reader will find an impetus to search the Scriptures to see whether these things are so. The prophecies to be considered are given in a group, for by thus throwing them together one may, at a glance, get a good idea of what has been written. In this Keith's plan is followed in part.

Concerning the evils and the calamities that should come upon the Jews if they forsook the way of God and fell into sin and iniquity, "the Lord spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai, Speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them, . . . And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat. And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and My soul shall abhor you. And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savor of your sweet odors. And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter thee among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate and your cities waste. And upon them that are left alive of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from the sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth.

And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies. And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands: and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them. And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the Lord their God."[1]

The blessings that were to come in rich measure upon God's chosen people if they diligently hearkened unto the voice of God to observe and to do all His commandments, were followed by prophetical utterances of coming calamities and judgments if they failed to obey Him who spake from heaven.

"The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. And thy carcass shall be meat unto all the fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray them away. Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them

[1] Lev. 26: 29-34; 36: 39-44.

all the day long: and there shall be no might in thine hand. The fruit of thy land, and all thy labors, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway: so that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. The Lord shall bring thee, and the king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone. And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee. The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low. He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail. Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded thee: and they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed forever. Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things. Therefore thou shalt serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and He shall put a yoke of iron up-

on thy neck, until He have destroyed thee. And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldst not obey the voice of the Lord thy God. And it shall come to pass, that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to naught; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: in the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see." [1]

The prophets succeeding Moses also took up the burden of prophecy and gave utterance to many predictions similar to those already given. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and a number of the minor prophets

[1] Deut. 28: 25, 26, 32-34, 36, 37, 43-48, 62-67.

unveiled the future and wrote, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, of those things that should certainly come upon the Jews because of their sin and iniquity. Many of the woes declared by Moses had come upon the people before the later prophets gave utterance to their denunciations of a people who refused to walk after the commandments of God. They hardened their hearts and closed their ears to the Word of the Lord and He sent these words to them by the mouth of Israel's greatest seer, Isaiah:

"And He said, Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? And He answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land."[1]

Jeremiah suffered imprisonment at the hands of the Jews because he preached the truth to them, but he ceased not to denounce their wickedness and to foretell the judgments of God that were to come upon them for evil doing. Hear the words of his proph-

[1] Isa. 6: 9-12.

ecy: "I will cause them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. . . . Thou hast forsaken Me, saith the Lord, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out My hand against thee, and destroy thee; and I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land; I will bereave them of children, I will destroy My people, since they return not from their ways. Therefore will I cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not, neither ye nor your fathers; where I will not show you favor. I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink. I will scatter them among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known. And I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them. And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers. And I will deliver them to be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them: because they have not hearkened to My words, saith the Lord." [1]

After revealing the future history of the Jews in the Scriptures already quoted, and setting forth the

[1] Jer. 15: 4, 6, 7; 16: 13; 9: 15, 16; 24: 9, 10; 29: 18, 19.

terrible calamities that would overtake them, there comes to them the comfort to be found in the following words of the prophet: "But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel: for, behold, I will save thee from afar off and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and be in rest and at ease, and none shall make him afraid. Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the Lord: for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished."[1]

Ezekiel and the minor prophets also took up the burden of prophecy against their own people and their kinsmen. The whole remnant of Israel was to be scattered to all the winds, and among the nations were they to be scattered and dispersed in the countries, and "they shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the stumblingblock of their iniquity."[2] "Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob,

[1] Jer. 46: 27, 28. [2] Ezek. 7: 19.

saith the Lord. For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth."[1] "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without a teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days."[2]

What a wonderful series of predictions is here given concerning the awful judgments that were to come upon the Israelites in the future! What a fullness of detail as to particular events which the centuries yet to come had in store for this remarkable people with whom God was, and is still, dealing. And then how clear, and in what simple words are the particulars of the predictions given. The very language used carries with it the conviction of truth and shows that the men who spoke were moved by a power greater than themselves. Here is no guessing, no uncertainty, no ambiguity, no double meaning, no doubt as to what the prophets had in mind when they spoke; but here are plain, simple words that all may read and understand, just such words as one might expect the Holy Ghost to give to the

[1] Amos 9: 8, 9. [2] Hosea 3: 4, 5.

holy men of God who spake as they were moved upon by the Spirit.

The heathen also had their soothsayers, their astrologers, their wise men, their seers and their oracles, but what a striking contrast is shown between the predictions of the prophets of the Most High God and the deliverances of the oracles and seers of the pagan religion. The ancient sibylline books of the Romans and the famous Delphic oracle of the Greeks were frequently consulted by emperors, kings, and great generals, but it required large sums of money to induce the guardians of the oracles to speak, and only the rich and powerful could have access to the temple and secure doubtful predictions from the so-called prophets. And when they did speak, their words were so adroitly constructed, and so ambiguous in meaning, that they might readily be construed to mean two or more different things. One is amazed, when reading the so-called predictions of the heathen oracles, at the unequaled credulity of those who laid their treasures of gold at the feet of the priestess, hoping to receive in return a favorable answer to their questions concerning the future. Let us compare the following examples of the obscure, ambiguous, double meaning utterances of the pagan oracles with the plain, simple, clear, concise predictions of the prophets of God.

Crœsus, the wealthy sovereign of Lydia, in Asia

Minor, whose name for centuries has been used to denote great riches, consulted the Delphian oracle as to whether he should go out in battle to the Persians who were marching against him. The reply was, "By crossing Halys, Crœsus will destroy a mighty power."

The Lydian monarch went into battle believing that it was the Persian power that was to be destroyed, but learned to his great sorrow that it was his own. The words of the oracle were so cunningly constructed that whether Crœsus or the Persians suffered defeat the claim could be made that the event had been foretold.

Before Maxentius left Rome to meet Constantine in the famous battle of the Tiber, in which he was overwhelmingly defeated and drowned in the river by the weight of his own armor, he consulted the guardians of the sibylline books as to whether he should be victorious in the coming conflict. "The guardians of the ancient oracles were as well versed in the arts of the world as they were ignorant of the secrets of fate; and they returned him a very prudent answer, which might adapt itself to the event, and secure their reputation, whatever should be the chance of arms." The answer to the question as to the issue of the day of battle was as follows:

"On that day the enemy of Rome will perish."

Had Maxentius lived after his defeat to reproach the oracle with falsehood, how the double dealing guardian of the sibylline books would have turned upon him and said, "Thou art the enemy of Rome to whom the words of the oracle refer; great are the sibylline books." If Constantine had been defeated, then he would have been the enemy of Rome that was to have perished. How cunningly the answer was given to make the honor of the oracle secure and to court favor with the victor.

When Pyrrhus consulted the oracles as to the advisability of his going to war with the Romans he was encouraged with the following obscure, ambiguous words, in which the double meaning is apparent to every intelligent reader:

"I declare thee, O Pyrrhus, the Romans to be able to conquer."

Had the Greek been victorious over his enemies, or had he returned to his own country defeated and dismayed, as he did, the reputation of the oracle was safe and its honor secure. Nothing of this character is to be found in the predictions in the Bible concerning the Jews. You may search the record from beginning to end, and not a single ambiguous expression will be found. The details are so clearly given that there is not the slightest doubt as to the meaning.

Before examining the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the Jews attention is called to a so-called modern prophecy known as Mother Shipton's prediction. Dr. Pierson has this to say about it: "Some years ago it appeared as a relic of a remote day, and claimed to have predicted the invention of steam as a motive power, diving suits, balloons, a threefold revolution in France; the rise of Disraeli, the Jew, as a figure in English politics, the erection of a crystal palace, etc. After its first appearance it was almost forgotten. Years later it reappeared, with a few very slight changes in the rhyme, such as to be scarcely noticed, and yet so including recent events as to make this 'prophecy' seem more startling. At times in arguing with skeptics I was met by the statement that here was an ignorant woman who lived four hundred years ago, and who had written an 'uninspired prophecy which was of undoubted antiquity, and, however rude in shape, containing several remarkable predictions.' So for years I have been trying to unearth and expose what seemed to me a huge imposture, and, having succeeded, here record the result. My first clue to the forgery was the discovery that at least three separate and different versions had been put before the people. The changes or variations were slight and sly, adroitly accommodating the pretended prophecy to the new developments of current history: till at last the whole

thing has been traced to Charles Hindley, who acknowledges himself the author of this prophetic hoax, which was written in 1862 instead of 1448, and palmed off on a credulous public! It is one of the startling proofs of human perversity that the very people who will try to cast suspicion on prophecies two thousand years old, will, without straining, swallow a forgery that was first published forty years ago, and not even look into its claims to antiquity."

The antiquity of the predictions of the Bible is unquestioned. At least two centuries before the Christian era the Book of God, with its prophecies, was translated from the Hebrew into the Greek. The ancient copies of the Book are among the oldest records in the world. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the predictions were all made long before the occurrence of the events foretold. In many instances centuries elapsed before the sure word of prophecy was completed, and the inspired predictions of the holy men of God became the history of the Jews. First, in point of time, came the captivity of Israel and the destruction of Solomon's temple by the king of Babylon. Returning again from the rivers of Babylon to their beloved Zion they rebuilt the walls and restored the temple and the waste places of Jerusalem. The lessons of the captivity brought them to consider their ways, and they were for a time faithful to God. But they soon forgot whence

they came, and fell into sin. Then came their submission to Alexander the Great, who was speedily followed by the Romans who finally took away their place and nation. These last events were clearly foretold twelve centuries before their occurrence.

Their cities were laid waste, their sanctuaries brought to desolation, and in anger and wrath they were plucked out of the land which God had given their fathers. The destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, with its terrible calamities and fearful judgments, was the beginning of the end of the Jewish nation. Recovering from the shock and slaughter occasioned by the destruction of their capital and the desolation of their holy sanctuary, they gathered their scattered hosts together to make their last expiring struggle against their enemies and strike their last blow for liberty and nationality. Scarcely sixty years had elapsed, after Titus had destroyed Jerusalem, when, led by the false hopes inspired by a pretended Messiah and by love for the country which heaven had given them, they made their last supreme, but ineffectual, effort to drive the Roman legions from their country and to regain their freedom from the intolerable oppression of their enemies. Two years of alternating hope and despair, of frightful slaughter, of terrible famine and pestilence, and the end, so long and persistently foretold by the prophets, came. The Jewish nation was destroyed. Their enemies, exasperated be-

yond measure, dealt them a blow from which they have not yet recovered. They were literally plucked out of their land and were dispersed among all the nations of the earth. Their cities were destroyed and left without an inhabitant. Fifty of their strongholds were razed to the ground, and not one stone was left on another that was not thrown down, and so complete was the destruction that the very sites of many of their most populous cities have been lost for centuries. Judea was laid waste as a desert, and all the land was made desolate. The Romans destroyed the timber on the hills and mountains, and the early and the latter rains ceased. The land that once flowed with milk and honey became a wasted wilderness. In the last great struggle hundreds of thousands of Jews fell by the edge of the sword, and their enemies only ceased from their terrible work when worn out by the incessant massacre. Those who escaped the edge of the sword were taken by force from Palestine and sold into slavery in the principal slave marts of the empire, and it is said that so many were offered for sale that buyers ceased to bid for human merchandise. No consideration was paid to age, sex or condition in life. The Roman heart knew not the meaning of the word pity, and at their hands all suffered alike. No nation of people ever suffered as the Jews without becoming extinct. With all their suffering, their hardships and the ca-

lamities that have come to them, they are still Jews. In every nation under the sun they are to be found, keeping their race peculiarities, their religion, and every distinction of their once prosperous nationality. Their cities have been wasted and are left without an inhabitant, are forsaken with no man dwelling in them, and they have been rooted out of the land which God gave to their fathers; in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation have they been plucked out. [1]

But their calamities and sufferings did not cease when they were driven away from their homeland. They became a reproach, a byword, a hissing and an astonishment among all the nations of the earth. Laws of the utmost severity were enacted against them. Adrian, emperor of Rome, made it an offense punishable with death for a Jew to set foot in Jerusalem, and they were not even permitted to look upon the city from a distance. From the days of Adrian to the present time edict after edict has been promulgated banishing these people from city to city and from country to country. The last example is to be found in the ukase of the Czar of Russia, issued in the last decade of the nineteenth century, banishing the Jews from his realms. Basnage in his history of the Jews says: "Kings have often employed the severity of their edicts, and the hands of ex-

[1] Isa. 6: 11; Jer. 4: 29; Deut. 29: 28.

ecutioners, to destroy them; the seditious multitude has performed massacres, and executions infinitely more tragical than princes. Both kings and people, heathens, Christians, and Mohammedans, who are so opposite in so many things, have united in the design of ruining this nation, and have not been able to effect it. The bush of Moses, surrounded with flames, has always burnt without consuming. The Jews have been driven from all places of the world, which has only served to disperse them more fully. They have, from age to age, run through misery and persecution, and torrents of blood."

Another author writing of the dispersion of the Jews says that the extent of this is more remarkable than its manner. Many prophecies described it, and foretold, thousands of years ago, what we now behold. They have been scattered among the heathen—among the people, even from one end of the earth unto the other. They have been removed into all the kingdoms of the earth; the whole remnant of them has been scattered into all the winds; they have been dispersed throughout all countries, and have been sifted in a sieve, and yet not the least grain has fallen to the earth: though dispersed throughout all nations, they have remained distinct from them all. There is not a country on the face of the earth where the Jews are unknown. They are found alike in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Amer-

ica. They are citizens of the world without a country. Neither mountains, nor rivers, nor deserts, nor oceans, which are the boundaries of other nations, have terminated their wanderings. They abound in Poland, in Holland, in Russia, and in Turkey. In Germany, Spain, Italy, France, and Britain they are more thinly scattered. In Persia, China, and India, on the east and the west of the Ganges, they are few in number among the heathen. They have trod the snows of Siberia, and the sands of the burning desert; and the European traveler hears of their existence in regions which he cannot reach, even in the very interior of Africa, south of Timbuctoo. From Moscow to Lisbon, from Japan to Britain, from Borneo to Archangel, from Hindostan to Honduras, no inhabitant of any nation upon the earth would be known in all the intervening regions but a Jew alone.[1]

After the dispersion of the Jews they found neither rest nor peace in the countries to which they fled for refuge. They found no place where they might set their feet and make for themselves a home and a country. They were despised and persecuted and driven from place to place until their *hearts failed them with trembling, and in no spot on all the earth could they stand before their enemies.* They became a despised race of peddlers whom the children stoned

[1] Keith, pp. 74, 75.

and jeered on the highway and in the streets of the towns and cities. Literally, and to the very letter, was the prophecy fulfilled *that children should be their princes and rule over them.* As we have already noted, the most cruel laws were enacted against them. Constantine, after suppressing a revolt among them, cut off the ears of the survivors and banished them from his empire. They went forth wandering vagabonds on the face of the earth, bearing the marks of the cruelty of the Roman emperor and their own disgrace with them. In the fifth century they were driven out of Alexandria, Egypt, with great cruelty. Here, for a time, they had been allowed to live in comparative quiet, and were led to believe that at last they had found a home; but they were cruelly deceived. They found no lasting abode, neither in Alexandria, nor in any other place in the world. Justinian issued a decree abolishing their synagogues and even forbidding them to enter caves and dens for the purpose of worship. He made their testimony inadmissible in courts of justice and deprived them of the right to bequeath their property. Heraclius persecuted them with cruelties too horrible to mention, and using his great influence had them persecuted in all parts of Europe and Asia. Suffering, despised, a proverb, and a byword in every land, they wandered with the curse of God upon them.

During the Middle Ages the condition of the Jews was not better than it had been in the first centuries of the present era. In Spain the inquisition, with its secret councils and its frightful instruments of torture, was invented to punish the Jews. The rack, the thumbscrew, the iron boot, heated until the flesh was roasted in it, were all used in torturing the unfortunate sons of Jacob. The only alternatives left them were conversion, banishment or death. One hundred and seventy thousand families were deprived of their property and driven from Spain at one time. In many parts of Europe they were compelled to wear a peculiar form of dress so that all might know and abuse them at their own will and pleasure. The Polish Jews are still to be recognized by their dress, for they have clung to the costume forced on their fathers four hundred or more years ago.

The Roman Catholic church has always treated the Jews as heretics. The great councils of the church enacted many laws against them. It was enjoined that no member of the church should eat with them or have any business relation with them. It was decreed that their children should be taken from them and be brought up in monasteries. They seemed to have no rights which a member of the Catholic church was bound to respect. It is a singular comment on the prevailing sentiment among the people in the

Midddle Ages that it was found necessary to pass a law forbidding any one to kill a Jew without good and sufficient cause. The same sentiment makes it necessary to pass a law in the city of Chicago in the twentieth century, forbidding boys to throw stones at Jewish peddlers.

Hallam in his history of the Middle Ages says of the Jews: "They were everywhere the objects of popular insult and oppression, frequently of general massacre. A time of festivity to others was often the season of mockery and persecution to them. It was the custom at Toulouse to smite them on the face at Easter. At Beziers they were attacked with stones from Palm Sunday to Easter, an anniversary of insult and cruelty generally productive of bloodshed, and to which the populace were regularly instigated by a sermon from the bishop. It was the policy of the kings of France to employ them as a sponge to suck their subjects' money, which they might afterward express with less odium than direct taxation would incur. It is almost incredible to what length extortion of money from the Jews was carried. A series of alternate persecution and tolerance was borne by this extraordinary people with an invincible perseverance, and a talent of accumulating riches, which kept pace with the exactions of their plunderers. Philip Augustus released all Christians in his dominions from their debts to the Jews,

reserving a fifth part to himself. He afterward expelled the whole nation from France." Again how literally are the words of the prophet fulfilled: "*They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord.*"

In England, during and after the Crusades, the whole nation united in a most cruel persecution of the Jews, and they were made to suffer on every hand. The very name became a reproach and byword, and many, to escape the most cruel punishments, denied that they belonged to the "accursed race." In the city of York fifteen hundred of these miserable people were denied all quarter, and men, women and children suffered death in the most horrible manner. Their silver and gold were extorted from them without regard to law or right, and finally, in A. D. 1280, Edward the First seized all their property and banished them from his kingdom, and four hundred years elapsed before they were permitted to return to England again.

As in England, France and Spain, so in other countries in Europe, the Jews were made to suffer extortion and persecution. They were entirely cut off from their fellow-citizens and were socially ostracised; more so than are the negroes in the South to-day. They were excluded by law from the ownership of

land, and this answers the question why more Jews are not engaged in agriculture. They were cut off from all trades except that of peddling in old clothes, and were even forbidden to buy certain classes of these. They were entirely excluded from some towns and cities and limited as to numbers and place of abode in others. In these latter they were confined to the ghettos, Jewish quarters, and to Judengassen, Jew streets. They were compelled to pay a poll tax every time they crossed the boundary of a petty county or went into a city, if it were twenty times a day. They were forbidden to marry except under restrictions intended to check the growth of the Jewish population. They were robbed of their money by process of law. They were personally tolerated by Frederick the Great in Prussia, but their right of abode extended to merely one child in a family, and for the right of a second child the sum of seventy thousand thalers had to be paid into the king's treasury. A poor Jew was not allowed to marry under any circumstances. And so the list of their hardships, their deprivations and sufferings might be carried to an indefinite length. But why continue? He who cares to read the history of this remarkable people will find a record of fulfilled prophecy which is among the greatest miracles of God's Book. And not the least surprising thing in the whole record is the fact

that through all the suffering and deprivations he has endured, the Jew is still a Jew.

In concluding this chapter, which leaves much that might be written, we can say with Keith that such are the prophecies and the facts respecting the Jews; and from premises like these the feeblest logician may draw a moral demonstration. If they had been utterly destroyed; if they had mingled among the nations; if, in the space of nearly eighteen centuries after their dispersion, they had become extinct as a people; even if they had been secluded in a single region, and had remained united; if their history had been like the history of any other nation upon the earth, an attempt might, with some show of reason, have been made to show cause why the prediction of their fate, however true to fact, ought not in such case to be sustained as evidence of the truth of inspiration. Or if the past history and present state of the Jews were not of a nature so singular and peculiar as to bear out to the very letter the truth of the prophecies concerning them, with what triumph would the infidel have produced these very prophecies as fatal to the idea of the inspiration of the Scriptures! And when the Jews have been scattered throughout the whole earth; when they have remained everywhere a distinct race; when they have been despoiled evermore, and yet never destroyed; when the most wonderful and amazing facts, such as never occurred among any

people, form the ordinary narrative of their history, and fulfill literally the prophecies concerning them, may not the believer challenge his adversary to the production of such credential of the faith that is in him? They present an unbroken chain of evidence, each link a prophecy and a fact, extending throughout a multitude of generations, and not yet terminated. Though the events, various and singular as they are, have been brought about by the instrumentality of human means, and the agency of secondary causes, yet they are equally prophetic and miraculous; for the means were as impossible to be foreseen as the end, and the causes were as inscrutable as the event; and they have been, and still in numberless instances are, accomplished by the instrumentality of the enemies of Christianity. Whosoever seeks a miracle may here behold a sign and wonder, than which there can be none greater. And the Christian may bid defiance to all assaults of his enemies from this stronghold of Christianity, impenetrable and impregnable on every side.

The prophecies concerning the Jews are as clear as a narrative of the events. They are as ancient as the oldest records in existence; and it has never been denied that they were all delivered before the accomplishment of one of them. They were so unimaginable by human wisdom that the whole compass of nature has never exhibited a parallel to the

events. And the facts are visible, and present, and applicable even to a hairbreadth. Could Moses, as an uninspired mortal, have described the history, the fate, the dispersion, the treatment, the dispositions of the Israelites to the present day, or for three thousand two hundred years, seeing that he was astonished and amazed, on his descent from Sinai, at the change in their sentiments and in their conduct in the space of forty days? Could various persons have testified, in different ages, of the selfsame and of similar facts, as wonderful as they have proved to be true? Could they have divulged so many secrets of futurity, when of necessity they were ignorant of them all? The probabilities are infinite against them. For the mind of man often fluctuates in uncertainty over the nearest events and the most probable results; but in regard to remote ages, when thousands of years shall have elapsed, and to facts respecting them, contrary to all previous knowledge, experience, analogy, or conception, it feels that they are dark as death to mortal ken. And, viewing only the dispersion of the Jews, and some of its attendant circumstances; how their city was laid desolate; their temple, which formed the constant place of their resort before, leveled with the ground and plowed over like a field; their country ravaged, and themselves murdered in mass; falling before the sword, the famine

and the pestilence; how a remnant was left, but despoiled, persecuted, enslaved, and led into captivity; driven from their own land, not to a mountainous retreat where they might subsist with safety, but dispersed among all nations, and left to the mercy of the world that everywhere hated and oppressed them; shattered in pieces like the wreck of a vessel in a mighty storm; scattered over the earth, like fragments on the waters, and instead of disappearing or mingling with the nations, remaining a perfectly distinct people, in every kingdom the same, retaining similar habits and customs, and creeds, and manners, in every part of the globe, though without ephod, teraphim, or sacrifice; meeting everywhere the same insult, and mockery, and oppression; finding no resting place without an enemy soon to dispossess them; multiplying amidst all their miseries; surviving their enemies; beholding, unchanged, the extinction of many nations, and the convulsion of all; robbed of their silver and of their gold, though cleaving to the love of them still, as the stumbling-block of their iniquity; often bereaved of their very children; disjoined and disorganized, but uniform and unaltered; ever bruised, but never broken; weak, fearful, sorrowful, and afflicted; often driven to madness at the spectacle of their own misery; taken up in the lips of talkers; the taunt and hissing and infamy of all people, and

continuing ever, what they are to this day, the sole common proverb to the whole world, how did every fact, from its very nature, defy all conjecture, and how could mortal man, overlooking a hundred successive generations, have foretold any one of the wonders that are now conspicuous in these latter times? Who but the Father of spirits, possessed of perfect knowledge of the will and of the actions of free, intelligent, and moral agents, could have revealed their unbounded and yet unceasing wanderings, unveiled their destiny, and unmasked the minds of the Jews and their enemies, in every age and in every clime? The creation of the world might as well be the work of chance as the revelation of these things. It is a visible display of the power and the prescience of God, an accumulation of many miracles. And although it forms but a small portion of the Christian evidences, it lays not only a stone of stumbling, such as infidels would try to cast in a Christian's path, but it fixes an insurmountable barrier at the very threshold of infidelity, immovable by all human device, and impervious to every attack.[1]

[1] Keith on Prophecy, pp. 88, 89.

CHAPTER EIGHT.

The Destruction of Jerusalem.

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.—Matt. 23: 37-39.

Of all the cities of the world, ancient or modern, none occupies a more important place in history than the city of Jerusalem. To Jew, Moslem and Christian it is alike a sacred, holy place. Nearly two thousand years ago, on a green hillock, in the early springtime, just outside the grim old walls of the city of David, the world's greatest tragedy was enacted. A young man, in the prime of life, was put to death on the cross as a common criminal, and yet from the life, and character, and teaching of that man an influence went out that has changed the face of the world. With Jesus dead on the cross, His few uneducated, illiterate and despised disciples scattered and in hiding, who but God could have told of the future triumph and glory of the Cross?

"Right forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne!
But that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown

Standeth God amid the shadows, keeping watch above His own."

And so the tragedy that took place hard by the old city of Jerusalem, on the hill shaped like unto a human skull, became the greatest blessing the world has ever known, and to the cross of Christ the ends of the earth are coming to be saved.

Before the death of our Lord He had told His disciples of the fate that was in store for the city of which He could truthfully say, "Thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee." His prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem startled His disciples; but long before His birth like calamities had been foretold by the prophets of God. While the Israelites were still wandering in the wilderness, before their triumphant entry into the land of Palestine, the destruction that was to come upon them because of their departure from God's laws was foretold. It was more than a thousand years before prophecies concerning the sifting of Israel were all fulfilled, but in the destruction of Jerusalem the end so long predicted came, and the commonwealth of Israel which had endured for fifteen hundred years disappeared from among the nations of the earth.

The prophecies are clear and easily understood: "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle

flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which regard not the person of the old, nor show favor to the young: and he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee. And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and defenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land." [1]

In every particular this prophecy, which was but an introduction to others, has been fulfilled. When God raised up the power of Rome and brought her legions from afar to eat up the fruit of Palestine and to destroy a people that would not obey Him, the prophecy met its full completion. The Romans were a cruel, bloodthirsty race of people. Their empire extending over the known world, they were almost constantly at war and thus became inured to its hardships, and the Roman soldier was known by his fierce countenance, his swiftness of foot and his innate cruelty. In times of peace only such sports satisfied him as resulted in bloodshed and death. The gladiatorial contests and the fighting with wild beasts were his common pastime. When

[1] Deut. 28: 49-52.

these fierce, warlike, cruel soldiers entered Palestine there was a striking contrast between them and the Oriental soldiers whom they met in conflict. The eagle was the royal standard of Rome under which her armies marched, and such was the celerity of movement, and the activity they displayed in conquering Judea, that the prophet could not have used a more striking figure of speech in describing them than by saying of them they are "as swift as the eagle flieth." The legions of Vespasian, Adrian, and Severus were brought from Britain, the farthest limit of the Roman world, and hurled upon the defenseless Jews of Palestine. In all the cities of the land, including Jerusalem itself, great slaughter of the Jews resulted. No distinction was paid to age, sex or condition in life. The aged father in Israel, mothers with babes in their arms, young men and maidens,—the latter suffering a fate worse than death,—and children were alike slain by the most cruel soldiery in the world. Those who escaped the edge of the sword were enslaved or banished to remote parts of the empire, their possessions were confiscated and their homes destroyed. Every city was broken down and their high walls of defense in which they trusted in vain were razed to the ground. The kingdom of Israel was brought low in humiliation. It became for a

time a Roman province and then the personal property of the emperor.

As noted, the prophecy just considered was but the introduction to others of still greater suffering, want and wretchedness than have preceded. Read what is predicted and then study the history of its fulfillment, and be convinced that the statement that history is prophecy fulfilled is true. "And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee. So that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave: so that he will not give to any of them the flesh of his children whom he shall eat: because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates. The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eyes shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son and toward her daughter, and toward her young and toward the children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the

siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates." [1]

While many instances are to be found in studying the history of the Jews in which some of the details of this most striking and awful prediction appear, its final and full completion is to be found only in the destruction of Jerusalem. When Samaria was besieged a terrible famine prevailed in the city, and we are informed that a compact was entered into by two mothers to consume their own offspring, and the agreement was in part consummated.[2] When the Assyrians came up against Jerusalem and besieged it, a grievous famine of unusual severity prevailed so that there was no bread for the people of the city, or of the land. Great suffering was endured, but not in all the details did it equal the awful condition set forth by the prophet fifteen hundred years before its final fulfillment. And yet the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar furnished a completion of many of the details of the prophecy. Keith says that the famine was too powerful for all other passions, for what was otherwise reverenced was in this case despised. Josephus in his history of the siege relates the dire calamities which fell upon the Jews in their last siege, before they ceased to have a city. Children snatched the food out of the very mouths of their

[1] Deut. 28: 53-57. [2] 2 Kings 6: 26-29.

parents; and even mothers, overcoming the tenderest feelings of nature, took from their perishing infants the last morsel that could sustain their lives. In every house where there was the least particle of food, a contest arose for its possession; and the nearest relatives struggled with each other for a miserable means of subsistence. Revolting detail after detail is related by the Jewish historian until the heart sickens at the terrible revelation of the awful doom that fell upon the Holy City. Josephus gives the harrowing details of a noble lady of high birth killing, with her own hands, and eating secretly her own suckling child, the discovery of which struck even the whole city with horror. This, with the inhuman compact between the Samaritan mothers, gives in part the fulfillment of the prophecy. How true that the eye of man was thus evil towards his brother, in the siege and in the straitness wherewith their enemies distressed them. The prophet Jeremiah bitterly laments over the miseries of the siege which he witnessed in these words: "The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people. The Lord hath accomplished His fury; He hath poured out His fierce anger, and hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof. The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the

world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem." [1]

The prophecies recorded in the Old Testament, which find their fulfillment in the destruction of Jerusalem, are in full harmony and agreement with the predictions made by our Lord when, with sorrowful heart and eyes dimmed with tears, He told His disciples of the coming siege and destruction of the Holy City. The prophets of old had declared that Jerusalem should be encamped round about, that forts should be raised up against it, that it should be plowed over and that the city should become heaps. A glimpse at the words of Jesus will show how they accord with the minutest details of former prophecies on the same subject: "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and His disciples came to Him for to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as He sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no

[1] Lam. 4: 10-12.

man deceive you. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached unto all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains: let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house: neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give

suck in those days! For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people; and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all nations. There shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled. This generation shall not pass away until all these things be done."[1]

"And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the day shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and they shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."[2]

These words of our Lord were spoken thirty-seven years before the destruction of Jerusalem and only a short time before his death, and so remarkably were they fulfilled when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans that some of the enemies of the truth have taken refuge behind the statement

[1] Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21. [2] Luke 19: 41-44.

that the prophecy was written after the events occurred. It is well to meet these objections. Pierson, writing on the ruin of Jerusalem, refers to this criticism saying that "any fair examination of this matter compels us first to ask whether there be a reasonable certainty that these prophetic words were spoken or written before the events occurred. This inquiry is at the very threshold of the whole investigation; to avoid it is to let everything else go unproved. A candid criticism can the less evade the issue, since it is forced upon us by the foes of the Christian religion. Porphyry, in the third century of the Christian era, made a desperate attack upon the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. Finding in the book of Daniel a prophecy that had been most minutely fulfilled, he first admitted with the utmost frankness that in every particular history verified the prophecy; and then adroitly turned his admission into a weapon of attack, arguing that a record so exact could only be made after the events: Daniel (he said) played the part of a historian in the mask of a prophet. If Porphyry was the first to suggest this easy escape from the argument of the prophecy, he was not the last. Voltaire, in modern times, has, in the same way, admitted the wonderful coincidence between those prophecies of the ruin of Jerusalem and the wreck of the Jewish nation, and the actual facts; but dexterously argues

that the pretended prophecy was never spoken or penned until after Jerusalem was destroyed.[1]

"As to Voltaire himself, any objection coming from such a source has very little weight. A man who could, in a letter to a friend, declare that 'history is, after all, nothing but a parcel of tricks we play with the dead,' and that, 'as for portraits of men in biography, they are, nearly all, the creations of fancy;' a man who, when asked where he found a certain startling 'fact' with which he adorns one of his histories, replied, 'It is a frolic of my imagination!' a man whose motto was, 'Crush the wretch!' and yet who called on that same Christ in his dying hour; a man who, after leading the hosts of skeptics and scoffers, as the boldest of blasphemers, for sixty years, died in agony and remorse so terrible that even Marechal de Richelieu fled from his bedside declaring that he could not bear so terrible a sight, and M. Tronchin affirmed that 'the furies of Orestes could give but a faint idea of those of Voltaire;' a man, who said to his attending physician, 'Doctor, I will give you half of what I am worth, if you will give me six months of life,' and who, when the doctor said, 'Sir, you

[1] NOTE.—It may be stated that Porphyry seems to have been ignorant of the fact that the Jews took the most religious care of the Scriptures, and also of the further fact that the Old Testament, including the book of Daniel, was translated into the Greek in the second century before the birth of Christ. Thus the argument of Porphyry becomes a convincing proof of the fulfillment of the prophecy of Daniel.

cannot live six weeks,' shrieked, 'Then I shall go to hell, and you will go with me!' and soon after expired;—such a man does not add much weight to his own objection. If a man does not feel the force of his own argument, others can scarcely be expected to give it much importance; and it is but too plain that Voltaire was not an honest skeptic, but a mocker, a jeerer, a sneerer, who, seldom himself in earnest, invented any objection which would serve his purpose. Yet, inasmuch as an objection may be entitled to weight independent of its author, we shall briefly examine as to the date of this prophecy."

"If this charge of fraud could for a moment be separated from religion, and looked at with calm, cool judgment, without any bias of prejudice, its inherent absurdity would be very plain. To suppose this prophecy to be written after the event is to suppose a deliberate imposture of gigantic proportions, palmed off on credulous dupes in the sacred name of religion; a compound of hypocrisy, forgery and perjury, such as would disgrace even a monster like Nero. Think of it! A man in league with two others, like himself, lays a plot to prop up the claims of a mere pretender, by secretly preparing a description of an event already past: and then by a series of lies, inducing men to accept it as a genuine prophecy! Could men who could

do that have written the Gospels? By confession even of the enemies of the religion of Christ, these records abound in the loftiest moral teaching, and the most sublime conceptions of God and duty. There must be some consistency between a man and his work; and the production of these gospel narratives by such abandoned liars is inconceivable. To believe this requires more credulity than to accept the Christian religion with scarce a hearing of its claims. The supposition of intentional imposture in the production of the Gospels must be abandoned as untenable; on its face it contradicts great established laws of human nature; and it supposes the whole body of believers to be imposed upon."

As already noted, the Gospels were written, comparatively speaking, only a few years after the death of our Lord. Matthew, according to the most careful and scholarly Bible students, gave his record not later than seven years after the crucifixion, and he gives the fullest and most complete record of this wonderful prophecy. Other details are, however, added by Mark and Luke, whose writings appeared A. D. 58-68. The three evangelists who give a record of the doom awaiting Jerusalem all wrote and probably died before the events took place. John wrote near the close of the century and makes no reference to the prophecy, for the very good reason that it had been literally ful-

filled by the destruction of the city at least twenty-five years before he wrote the Gospel bearing his name. If he had mentioned the prophecy, the objections of Porphyry and Voltaire might have had some force so far as his record was concerned. May he not have omitted mention of it on this very ground? The record is clear. By the unanimous consent of antiquity the prophecy was recorded at least thirty years before the events predicted took place.

But there are other evidences as strong as, if not stronger than, those already given to show that the prophecy preceded the events foretold. Copies of the Gospels must have multiplied rapidly and been spread abroad over the country. The disciples went everywhere preaching and teaching the religion of Jesus. They had, at a very early date, the Gospel of Matthew in their hands. The record was short and copies could be made with ease, and with their zeal and earnestness they would distribute large numbers of the work. Any attempt at deceit would have been instantly detected and made use of by their powerful and crafty foes against the new faith they were propagating. They were surrounded with, and met on every hand by, determined enemies. Every inch of ground was contested by men who were fighting for the religion of their fathers, dating back to Abraham. Every

possible argument was brought against them, and for centuries the hottest hostility prevailed and even persecution came to the aid of the enemies arrayed against the Gospel. The souls of the followers of Jesus were tried by fire, but through all the charges they were called upon to meet, that of fraud was never brought against them. The writers of the first centuries never challenged the authenticity and genuineness of the Gospel, or of the prophecy. There cannot be the least shadow of a doubt that if any attempt had been made to palm off history for prophecy, it would at once have been detected and used as an irresistible weapon against Christianity.

The hand of God is not only shown in the prophecy, but also in the history which records its fulfillment. "The main account of the destruction of Jerusalem, if it had been purposely written to confirm the predictions of Christ, could not have been more exactly correspondent." God raised up Josephus, the great Jewish scholar, historian and general, to write the record. He fought against the Romans in Galilee, holding out forty-seven days against Vespasian, and was taken prisoner in A. D. 67. He was an eyewitness to the horrors of the siege of the city, being with Titus and noting the events which he afterwards describes. After the destruction was complete he went with the victori-

ous general to Rome, where he wrote his annals, and because of their accuracy the emperor gave them his approval and requested their publication. Had the history been written by a Christian author the charge would doubtless have been made that it was colored to fit the prophecy, but no such charge can be made against Josephus, who lived and died a Pharisee of the straitest sect. No one will venture to accuse the Jewish author of partiality for the Nazarene or his prophecies. If any charge is to be made, it must be that he shows his prejudice against Christ and Christianity by the very slight reference he makes to them. So God chose an enemy of the Christian religion to give us, in all its details, the history of the fulfillment of one of the most wonderful and minutest prophecies in the Bible. Josephus makes no reference to the predictions. He makes a record of their fulfillment, as a reliable historian, not thinking that he was an instrument in the hands of God to bear witness before all the world of the prophetic character of Jesus Christ.

Aside from Josephus we must depend upon the pagan writers for other accounts of the destruction of Jerusalem. These are brief and fragmentary. Tacitus, the Roman writer, gives some account of the wars in Palestine and the destruction of Jerusalem. Suetonius, Philostratus and Dion Cassius,

all pagan writers, relate not a few of the transactions connected with the fulfillment of the prophecy. In modern times Gibbon, the English historian, although a skeptic, was compelled to record the facts which prove that Christ was a great prophet. So in the mouth of His enemies is the truth declared that Jesus of Nazareth filled the prophetical office.

Harmonizing the accounts given by the first three evangelists of the prophecy, we find in them no less than twenty-five distinct predictions, while particular details number many more. Some of these are yet to be fulfilled, but most of them find their full completion in the ruin of Jerusalem and the final overthrow of the Jews as a nation. At best space allows only a very brief view of each of these predictions.

Matthew prefaces the prophecy by giving the words of Jesus spoken to His disciples when they called His attention to the buildings of the temple, and these words give us the first prediction: "There shall not one stone be left on another that shall not be thrown down." When the temple was destroyed by the Roman soldiers, the very foundations were razed, and not a single stone was left on another. So complete was the destruction that no one has been able to this day to determine the exact foundation of the structure.

Second. False Christs were to arise. Third. Many were to be deceived. These predictions were literally fulfilled. There arose one Simon Magus who boasted that he was some great one and deceived a number of the people. Dositheus, the Samaritan, pretended that he was the lawgiver prophesied by Moses. Theudas promised that he parted the waters of the Jordan as Elijah had done, and by "such speeches deceived many," so says Josephus. The country was filled with impostors who deceived great numbers of the people and led many into the wilderness.[1] Many of them perished, and in one of the tumults, which were of frequent occurrence, the soldiers took two hundred prisoners and slew twice as many more.

Fourth. "There shall be wars and rumors of wars." When Christ made this prediction the Jews and all the nations around and about them were at peace. Soon after this the Romans attempted to set up a statue of Caligula in the temple, which the Jews resisted; but even then the leaders among them did not believe that war was imminent. But Josephus says, "The country was soon filled with violence; disorders prevailed in Alexandria, Cæsarea, Damascus, Tyre, Ptolemais and all Syria." The Jews rebelled against Rome and in two years four Roman emperors—Nero, Galba, Otho and

[1] Josephus, book 20, chap. 5, sec. 1.

Vitellius—suffered death. Twenty thousand Jews were put to death at Cæsarea, fifty thousand at Damascus, and ten thousand at Alexandria. Nation rose against nation and there was terrible slaughter and bloodshed in all the land.

Fifth. "And there shall be famines and pestilence." These twin evils often follow in the wake of great wars, and especially was this true in ancient times. The destruction of life and property brought want and famine, and then came the pestilence. Prior to the fall of Jerusalem a famine of several years' duration prevailed in Judea, and it is recorded that there was a sore famine in Italy, and that pestilence followed these.

Sixth. "And there shall be earthquakes in divers places." In the reign of Claudius earthquakes of unusual severity occurred at Rome, at Apamea and in Crete. In Nero's time there was an earthquake in the Campania, and another in Asia Minor in which Laodicea, Hierapolis and Colosse were overthrown. There is also a record of an extraordinary earthquake in Judea. These all occurred after the death of Christ and before the fall of Jerusalem. "The constitution of nature," says Josephus, "was confounded for the destruction of men, and one might easily conjecture that no common calamities portended."[1]

[1] Josephus, book 4, chap. 4.

Seventh. "And fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven." Both Josephus and Tacitus agree in relating supernatural events which occurred at the time predicted. "A light in heaven in the shape of a sword stood over the city of Jerusalem, a great comet appeared, the heavy eastern gate of the city, which required a number of men to move, opened of its own accord, a light shone around the altar, and a great earthquake occurred and a supernatural voice was heard at Pentecost." "At Rome," says Tacitus, "fire fell from the clouds on the temples, a loud voice was heard proclaiming the removal of gods from the temples, and a sound as of a departing host was heard." Some may doubt that these sounds were supernatural; be that as it may, both the Roman and Jewish historian considered them miraculous. God's hand was in the prophecy; think it not strange then if His power was also manifest in its fulfillment.

Eighth and ninth. The great persecution of the church. Before Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Romans the disciples of Jesus suffered great persecution. They were cast into prison and many of them were put to death. They were hated by all nations for His name's sake. Peter, Simon, and Jude were crucified.[1] Paul was beheaded; Mat-

[1] Cave's "Lives of the Apostles."

thew, Thomas, James, Matthias, Mark and Luke suffered martyrdom in various ways in different countries. They suffered the most cruel tortures. The monster Nero, in order to screen himself from guilt, accused the Christians of setting Rome on fire, and inflicted upon them unspeakable cruelties. They were brought before kings and rulers, so that in every detail the words of Jesus were fulfilled.

Tenth. Many shall be offended and shall betray one another, and the love of many shall wax cold. Paul often complained of false brethren, and when he stood the first time before Nero he was forsaken by all. Tacitus testifies that many of the Christians were convicted on the testimony of others who had been previously accused. These, proving unfaithful, betrayed their brethren, and by this means a great multitude was convicted.

Eleventh. The Gospel was to be preached to all nations. What a work to be done and but forty years for its accomplishment. The rapid spread of the Christian religion is not the least of the miracles connected with it. After the ascension of Christ a little band of not more than one hundred and twenty met in an upper room at Jerusalem. It was the nucleus of the Christian world. The leaders were a few unlettered fishermen of Galilee, afterwards assisted by a tentmaker of Tarsus. And yet before the forty years had expired a wonderful

work had been accomplished. Peter going eastward to the dispersed tribes of Israel, Paul westward to the Gentiles, and others journeying north and south, the words of the Lord were literally fulfilled. Before Jerusalem was destroyed epistles had been written to Christians at Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse, Thessalonica, and in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Bithynia. The preaching of the Gospel had been heard in Asia, Greece, Italy, Scythia, Ethiopia, Egypt, Parthia, Spain, Great Britain, and possibly India. Tacitus says the religion of Jesus had spread all through the Roman empire and that its adherents numbered so many that great multitudes were arrested and suffered martyrdom. So the prophetic words of our Lord were fulfilled and the day of doom had come upon the city.

Twelfth to fourteenth. Jerusalem was to be encompassed with armies and an embankment was to be cast up around her. The siege of Jerusalem was at first conducted by Cestius Gallus, the Roman general, who compassed the city round about with his armies. According to Josephus, great consternation prevailed among the inhabitants of the city, and the chief men were ready to open the gates to the Romans, but for some unaccountable reason Gallus withdrew his armies and the way was open for as many as would to escape from the fated city.

The Christians, taking advantage of this opportunity, made their escape, fleeing to the mountains and to the city of Pella. It is a matter of record that not a single Christian was killed in the siege, and thus were the words of the Master fulfilled, "Not a hair of your heads shall perish."[1]

But the respite was short. Vespasian came against the city and completely encompassed it. A trench was digged and an embankment was thrown up. Never before had this means of assault been resorted to. The city, surrounded by hills and valleys east, south and west, made it seem useless to resort to trenches. "Yet Titus, against the counsel of his chief men, actually built a wall and a trench five miles in circumference around the doomed capital; and the Jewish historian describes the exact circuit."[2] Christ uttered the prophetic words, and behold in history their full completion.

Fifteenth. The abomination spoken of by Daniel the prophet. What the "abomination of desolation standing in the holy place" means, is not clear. It may refer to the desolating Gentile army with its idolatrous standards, or, as some think, to the statue set up in the holy place by Hadrian. Whatever it may mean, there is no doubt that it was seen and understood by the Jews, and added to their rage and humiliation.

[1] Luke 21: 18.

[2] Eusebius, book 3, chap. 5.

Sixteenth. As the lightning flashes from the east to the west, so was the destruction of the city to come. Contrary to all expectation, the Romans approached the city from the east, coming over Olivet and encamping on Mount Scopus. A careful study of the surrounding country would indicate that the most feasible point of attack would be from the north and west, and the most difficult from the east and south. But the bolts of fire burst from the clouds of war from the summit of Scopus and the Mount of Olives.

Seventeenth. "For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." It is a well-known fact that the eagle was the standard of the Roman army, the symbol of Roman power. When her armies gathered around the doomed city, the silver eagles flashed in the sunlight above every waving banner borne by the legions of the Gentile army; fitting emblem of "strength, swiftness, ferocity," and like the vultures they swooped down upon the city, which because of sin and wickedness had become a festering carcass in the sight of God. [1]

Eighteenth. "For there shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." This is one of the strongest predictions in the series, but not stronger than the facts of its fulfillment.

[1] "Many Infallible Proofs." p. 62.

In point of time this was not the last of the predictions, but for want of space we can but glance at the rest and conclude with this. Following it came the desolation of the city, the Jews falling by the edge of the sword, being sold into captivity, the razing of the foundations of Jerusalem, plowing it as a field and leveling its walls, the city to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles; and all these things were to come to pass in the lifetime of some of those who were then living. In every particular down to the very minutest details the words of this prophecy were fulfilled.

The cup of the wickedness of the city of Jerusalem was full to overflowing, and then came "the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled." The burden of prophetic vision from Moses to Christ was at last to be completed in the total destruction of the city that knew not the day of her visitation. Hear again the record of the Jewish historian: "No other city suffered such miseries, nor was ever a generation more fruitful in wickedness from the beginning of the world. It appears that the misfortunes of all men from the beginning of the world, if compared with those of the Jews, are not so considerable. The multitude who perished exceeded all the destructions that man ever brought on the world." God punishes nations in this world, individuals in the next. The

sore punishment which fell upon Jerusalem was only in proportion to her sin and wickedness.

The particulars of the siege are given by Josephus in all their horrible details, and form an account of the tribulation and suffering which he frequently says is unequaled in the history of the world. Instead of giving the details recorded by the Jewish historian, we adapt the words of Keith taken from the same source. No general description can give a just idea of the most terrible calamities that any nation ever suffered. The Jews had assembled in their city from all the surrounding country, to keep the feast of unleavened bread. It was crowded with inhabitants, when they were all imprisoned within its walls by the Romans. They had assembled to observe the passover which commemorated their deliverance from Egypt. It was now to be the last signal of their destruction.

Before the Romans appeared without, the fiercest dissensions prevailed within; the blood of thousands was shed by their brethren; they destroyed and burned in their frenzy their common provision for their siege; they were destitute of any regular government, and divided into three factions. On the extirpation of one of these, each of the others contended for the mastery. The most ferocious and frantic, the robbers or zealots, as they are indiscriminately called, prevailed at last. They entered

the temple, under the pretense of offering sacrifices, and carried concealed weapons for the purpose of assassination. They slew the priests at the very altar; and their blood, instead of that of the victims for sacrifice, flowed around it. They afterwards rejected all terms of peace with the enemy; none were suffered to escape from the city after its final investment; every house was entered, every article of subsistence was pillaged, and the most wanton barbarities were committed. Nothing could restrain their fury; wherever there was the appearance or scent of food, the human bloodhounds tracked it out; and though a general famine raged around, though they were ever trampling on the dead, and though the habitations of the living were converted into charnel houses, nothing could intimidate, or appall, or satisfy, or shock them, till Mary, the daughter of Eleazar, a lady once rich and noble, displayed to them and offered to them all her remaining food, the scent of which had attracted them in their search,—the bitterest morsel that ever mother or mortal tasted,—the remnant of her half-eaten suckling child.

Sixty thousand Roman soldiers unremittingly besieged them, and hemmed them in on every side; they brought down their high and fenced wall to the ground; they slaughtered the slaughterers, they spared not the people; they burned the temple, in

defiance of the commands, the threats and resistance of their general. With it the last hope of the Jews was extinguished. They raised, at the sight, a universal but an expiring groan of sorrow and despair. Ten thousand were there slain and six thousand were enveloped in the flames. The whole city, full of the famished and dying, and of the murdered dead, presented no picture but that of despair, no scene but of horror. The aqueducts and the sewers were crowded as the last refuge of the hopeless. Two thousand were found dead there, and many were dragged thence and slain. The Roman soldiers put all to death indiscriminately and ceased not till they became faint and weary and overpowered with the work of destruction. But they only sheathed the sword to apply the torch. They set fire to the city in various places. The flames spread everywhere, and were checked but for a moment by the red streamlets in every street. Jerusalem became heaps. Within the circuit of a few miles, in the space of five months,—foes and famine, pillage and pestilence within, a triple wall around, and besieged every moment without,—eleven hundred thousand human beings perished. Was there ever such a concentrated mass of human misery? Could any prophecy be more faithfully and awfully fulfilled?

The prospect of His own crucifixion, when Jesus was on His way to Calvary, was not more clearly before Him, and seemed to affect Him less than the fate of Jerusalem. How full of tenderness and fraught with truth was the sympathetic response of the condoling sufferer to the wailings and lamentations of the women who followed Him, when He turned unto them and beheld the city, which some of them might yet live to see wrapt in flames and drenched in blood, and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

More minute details might be given at length, but surely this is enough. It may yet be added that Titus commanded the whole city and temple to be razed from the foundation. The soldiers were not then disobedient to their general. Avarice combined with duty and with resentment: the altar, the temple, the walls of the city, were overthrown from the base, in search of the treasures which the Jews, beset on every hand by plunderers, had concealed and buried during the siege. Three towers and the remnant of a wall alone stood, the monument and memorial of Jerusalem; and the city was afterwards plowed over by Terentius Rufus. In the siege, and in the previous and subsequent destruction of the cities and villages of Judea, according to the specified enumeration of Josephus, about

one million three hundred thousand suffered death. Ninety-seven thousand were led into captivity. They were sold for slaves, and were so despised and disesteemed that many remained unpurchased. And their conquerors were so prodigal of their lives, that in honor of the birthday of Domitian, two thousand five hundred of them were placed, in savage sport, to contend with wild beasts, and otherwise to be put to death.

CHAPTER NINE.

Babylon the Great City.

Is not this great Babylon that I have builded?—Dan. 4: 30.

Babylon was an old city when Nineveh was founded. It was one of the earliest and most important cities of the race which founded Ur of the Chaldees. Cuneiform inscriptions recently discovered seem to point to it as the Babel of the Bible; and the fact that the ruins of a huge tower are located here, known as the tower of Babel, indicates this as the place of the confusion of tongues. Babylon was "the glory of the kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' excellency." Its fame went abroad among all the nations of the earth. Its great walls, its magnificent palaces, its wonderful temples, its hanging gardens, its hundred brazen gates, its embankments which restrained the Euphrates in its flow through the city, its great artificial lake, and the greatness of its power were the wonders of the world. When Nineveh was overthrown by Nabopolassar, the traitor general, he at once established his capital at Babylon. He was succeeded by his son Nebuchadnezzar, a brilliant general and an able statesman. Inheriting a kingdom not larger than the State of Illinois, he extended its limits over all the known world. His power

was autocratic, and the prophet Jeremiah aptly named him "the hammer of the whole earth." His supreme ambition was to make of Babylon, what in later years Napoleon strove to make of Paris, the one unsurpassable city of the whole world; and he succeeded in carrying out his purpose. With unbounded wealth in his hands, for he drained the treasures of all the richest nations into his own, and with an unlimited number of men, taken captive in war, he succeeded in making, in his own words, this "great Babylon, built by the might of his power and for the glory of his majesty, the lady of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldees' excellency, the joy of the earth." But great as was this mistress of the whole world, when it was at the height of its power, a century and a half before an enemy set foot within its great walls, the prophets of Israel foretold its doom and prophesied the utter destruction and complete desolation of the mighty and unconquered city. Centuries passed away, and "the lady of kingdoms" was gradually brought to the dust and to utter desolation. The traveler who today walks over its heaps and mounds, startling the wild beast in its lair and the owl in its gloom, and describes its ruin, writes only of fulfilled prophecy.

Concentrated in this one great city were to be found the mightiest works of mortals, and when we consider them for a moment, its utter destruc-

tion seems all the more strange and singular. For years the historical accounts of Babylon, which came down to us from the ancient writers, notably Herodotus and Ctesias, both of whom were eye-witnesses to what they described, were accepted by scholars as being largely imaginary descriptions of the city; but recent discoveries have induced a belief that the historians related only the facts, and the description given by Herodotus is now generally accepted as being in the main correct. The conflicting statements made by travelers may be easily reconciled by supposing that they refer to different periods in the history of the city. According to this account the city was built four-square, and was surrounded by a wall, each side of which was fifteen miles long, three hundred feet high and seventy-five feet wide at the top, where a four-horse chariot could easily turn around and where half a score of war chariots might be driven abreast a distance of sixty miles before reaching the starting point. The wall was protected by parapets, and two hundred and fifty immense towers were built up with it.

Outside the wall was a moat or canal, deep and wide, kept constantly filled with water. It afforded protection to the city from its enemies. The clay dug from the moat was molded into bricks and, laid in bitumen, formed the great wall of Babylon,

which was pierced by a hundred gateways all closed with massive brass gates with brazen lintels and huge bronze posts built in the wall.

The space inclosed within the walls measured about two hundred square miles in area, or about one hundred and twenty-eight thousand acres. The Euphrates bisected the city diagonally, from the northwest to the southeast. In its passage, the river was forced between massive walls, which were equal in thickness to the outer walls, and its bed was lined with glazed brick. In order to accomplish this great work Nebuchadnezzar had an immense reservoir, or inland lake, dug, which occupied forty square miles west of Borsippa, and this received the waters of the stream, while its channel, nearly twenty-three miles in length, was walled and lined by his army of workmen. Some of the streets were carried over the river by bridges, while others ran in tunnels beneath its bed. On the east side of the Euphrates stood the palace of the king, named by its pleasure-loving owner, "The Admiration of Mankind." Two of its ponderous gates of brass were so heavy that they could only be opened and closed by the use of strong machinery. In the palace was brought together all the splendor that unlimited wealth could procure. Here was a room plated with silver, another with burnished gold, another was studded with rubies, and

still another with sapphires, and all the palace shone in magnificent splendor. It was built on the largest lines of architecture and finished with the finest art of the jeweler. Near by stood the great temple of the god Belus, a half mile in circumference and a furlong in height, and here were the wonderful hanging gardens, built by the king to solace his Median wife who longed for the hills of her native land. "Enormous arches of masonry were piled one upon another, supporting hills of earth, whose wild flowers nestled amid the roots of forest trees, and artificial crags, down which dashed brooks kept full from the Euphrates by water screws, some centuries before they were invented by Archimedes."

Not only was Babylon the most powerful and the most magnificent city in all the earth, but it was surrounded by the plains of Chaldea, also known as Babylonia, rich and fertile in the production of food supplies. The country, watered and enriched by the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates, formed a vast, fertile plain, the richest and most productive in all the world. It was irrigated by a system of canals which rendered a failure of crops impossible, and the rich, inexhaustible soil brought forth every year the most abundant harvests. Herodotus is authority for the statement that such was the wonderful fertility of Chaldea that no one but an eye-

witness could realize the rich, exuberant production of the land. The soil, he says, produced the finest crops of grain in the world, and never less than two hundred and sometimes as much as three hundredfold. This rich and fertile land supplied the city with great abundance of food, and Babylon seemed secure in its greatness. But the prophets of God saw the destruction of the city and the desolation of the fertile plain and recorded their predictions in His Book, and the flight of centuries has served to confirm in every particular and detail the prophecies. "The judgments of heaven are not casual, but sure; they are not arbitrary, but righteous. And they were denounced against the Babylonians, and the inhabitants of Chaldea, expressly because of their idolatry, tyranny, oppression, pride, covetousness, drunkenness, falsehood, and other wickedness. So debasing and brutifying was their idolatry,—or so much did they render the name of religion subservient to their passions,—that practices the most abominable, which were universal among them, formed the very observance of their religious rites, of which even heathen writers could not speak but in terms of indignation and abhorrence. Though enriched with a prodigality of blessings, the glory of God was not regarded by the Chaldeans; and all the glory of man, with which the plain of Shinar was covered, has become,

in consequence as well as in chastisement of prevailing vices and of continued though diversified crimes, the wreck, the ruin, and the utter desolation which the Word of God foretold should come to pass."

The first intimation of the beginning of the end came to king Nebuchadnezzar. In his gorgeous palace, surrounded by magnificence unequaled even by the splendor that came to the fortunate possessor of Aladdin's wonderful lamp, lay the king upon his couch. He had reached the pinnacle of all earthly power and the very zenith of all earthly glory; as he lay musing upon his greatness and the work of his genius, he slumbered, and while he slept a strange dream came to him. He awoke, but his dream, as well as the peace of his mind, was gone. His wise men, his astrologers, his magicians and sorcerers were called, and the king demanded that they should bring back to him his forgotten dream and give him the interpretation thereof. And they answered, "O king, live forever, tell thy servants the dream and we will show the interpretation." The answer came from the autocrat whose will was law, "The thing is gone from me, make it known unto me, or ye shall be cut in pieces." Among the many captives the king had taken was Daniel, a Hebrew youth; the Spirit of the God of Israel was upon him and he revealed the dream to the king,

and gave him the interpretation thereof in these words: "They shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." [1]

A strange dream and a stranger interpretation! How were the words of the prophet Daniel to be fulfilled? Why should a great and powerful king like Nebuchadnezzar be thus treated by his people? Here at last the infidel and Bible critic concluded that they had found a weak point; but they had not taken into account the buried records of the past which were to be brought to light by the spade and pick of the excavator. An old tablet has been recovered from the ruins of Babylon, inscribed by the king's secretary, and signed by the sovereign himself, which contains a record of the remarkable malady that came upon him. The tablet is now in the British Museum. Rawlinson's translation is as follows: "For four years the seat of my kingdom did not rejoice my heart. In all my dominions I did not build a high place of power. The precious treasures of my kingdom I did not lay up. In Babylon, buildings for myself and the honor of my

[1] Dan 4: 25.

kingdom I did not lay out. In the worship of Merodach, my Lord, the joy of my heart, in Babylon the city of his sovereignty, and the seat of his empire, I did not sing his praises. I did not furnish his altars with victims, nor did I clear his canals." Rawlinson adds, "We can scarcely imagine anything that would account for this record but some extraordinary malady as that recorded by Daniel." And thus again is the truth of God's Book verified and the infidel and skeptic put to shame. Even medical science aids the Bible. The malady which attacked Nebuchadnezzar is known as lycanthropy, a mental aberration which induces the patient to imagine himself to be an animal of some kind, and for the time being he assumes the habits of the animal he fancies himself to be. The king's madness led him to believe that he was an ox, and like an ox he ate grass, and his locks were wet with the dew of heaven until he was convinced that the Most High ruleth among the kingdoms of men. It is a fact no less curious than interesting that in the valley of the Euphrates, around and about the ruins of Babylon, there is a grass which is succulent, has a mild, peppery taste, is very nutritious, is eaten by the natives, and is called Nebuchadnezzar grass.

The reign of Nebuchadnezzar continued for forty-three years, and dying he left Babylon the me-

tropolis of the world. Thither Egypt sent for sundials and water clocks. Thence the ladies of the Orient received the fashions, as Christendom receives the fashions from Paris to-day. From Babylon Tyre took the weights and measures which regulated all its vast commerce. From Babylon the Greeks received the tables on which their science was based, and Lydia the lutes on which she learned to excel her master. To Babylon Egypt sent her finest gold and choicest ivory, India her largest pearls, Tyre her most gorgeous dyes, Arabia her choicest spices, Media her agates and emeralds, which nowhere else could be so finely cut and polished. Thither Greece sent her most beautiful slaves, for in Babylon a dancing girl might be sold for the price of a year's pay to a thousand soldiers. The great Babylonian banking house of the Egibi, whose checks and receipts, in clay, still exist in great numbers, occupied for five generations at Babylon the place filled in Europe by the Rothschilds.[1]

But the doom of the city was sealed and its destruction came as a quick thunderbolt from an overhanging cloud. Its kings and nobles reveled in sin and vice and drank from golden cups, sparkling with diamonds, their own undoing and death. Vice, no longer regarded as a monster, was worshiped as a god. "The debaucheries into which

[1] "Ancient Cities of the Bible," pp. 50, 51.

the people sank with fearful rapidity may not be described. A law was enforced, probably the most infamous known to the annals of our race, which was designed, by pandering to the grossest passions of our nature, to attract strangers to Babylon by making it a paradise, or rather a stew of sensuality. That nameless horror was conspicuous among the causes of her ruin."[1] The cup of her iniquity was full, and the wrath of God fell upon the wicked city as it had fallen upon Sodom and Gomorrah a thousand years before.

Long before the end came, the Holy Ghost moved upon the prophets of Israel to foretell and make a record of the fate that the future held in store for the city of Babylon, and this record we now call attention to: "Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob My servant's sake, and Israel Mine elect,

[1] "Ancient Cities," pp. 50, 51.

I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known Me."[1]

"Therefore hear ye the counsel of the Lord, that He hath taken against Babylon, and His purposes that He hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans; surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; surely He shall make their habitations desolate with them."[2] "I will send into Babylon fanners, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land: for in the day of trouble they shall be against her round about. Against him that bendeth let the archer bend his bow, and against him that lifteth himself up in his brigantine: and spare ye not her young men; destroy ye utterly all her host. Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and they that are thrust through in her streets. . . Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so she may be healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country; for her judgment reaches unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies. . . The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes; for his device is against Babylon to destroy it. . . O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasure, thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness. The Lord of hosts hath sworn

[1] Isa. 45: 1-4. [2] Jer. 50: 45.

by Himself, saying, Surely I will fill thee with men, as with caterpillars, and they shall lift up a shout against thee. Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth; and I will stretch out My hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and I will make thee a burnt mountain. Set up the standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her; call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; prepare against her the nations, with the kings of the Medes, the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominion. And the land shall tremble and sorrow; for every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant. The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight, they have remained in their holds; their might hath failed; they became as women; they have burnt her dwelling places; her bars are broken. One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end, and that the passages are stopped. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor: it is time to thresh her; yet a little time and her harvest shall come. I will dry

up her sea, and make her springs dry. And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant. In their heat I will make their feasts, that they may sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake. How is the praise of the whole earth surprised! How is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations! The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. Her cities are a desolation, a dry land and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby. And I will punish Bel in Babylon; and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him; yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall. A rumor shall come one year, and after that in another year shall come a rumor, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler. Therefore, behold, the days come that I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon; and her whole land shall be confounded, and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her. . . And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King whose name is the Lord of hosts. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken,

and her high gates shall be burnt with fire; and the people shall labor in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary. And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates: and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her."[1]

In these prophecies are given abundant particulars of the judgments that were to fall upon Babylon. The prophet not only foretold the overthrow of the city, but he even named the king who was to accomplish the great work, and he did this years before Cyrus was born. He was anointed by the Lord to conquer Babylon and allow the Jews to return to Palestine. For a long time the theory was held that Cyrus believed in one supreme God and that this community of belief with the Jews led him to favor them and to permit them to return to their own country. This was held to weaken the statement made in the Bible that Cyrus did not know God. The discovery in the ruins of Babylon of a terra cotta cylinder, inscribed by order of Cyrus, and a tablet describing the conquest of Babylonia, shows that the king was not a monotheist, but a believer in Bel, or Baal, Merodach, Nebo, and other gods of the Babylonians. The

[1] Jer. 51: 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 25, 27-33, 36, 37, 39, 41-44, 46, 47, 57, 58, 63, 64.

inscriptions confirm in a remarkable manner the words spoken by Isaiah concerning Cyrus: "*I have even named thee, I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known Me.*" The cylinder and tablet also show that Cyrus was not a Persian king, but an Elamite. Sayce referring to this says: "The most startling revelation they make is that he (Cyrus) was not a king of Persia at all. Persia seems to have been acquired by him after his conquest of Astyages, at some time between the sixth and ninth year of Nabonidos. Both he and his ancestors were kings of Anzan or Elam. It is true he could trace his descent back to a member of the royal Persian clan, Teispes, who appears to have taken Elam during the troublous period that followed the fall of Assyria, and to have resigned his Persian dominions to his son Ariaramnes, the great-grandfather of Darius. It must be this conquest of Elam which was prophesied by Jeremiah at the beginning of Zedekiah's reign,[1] and the result of it was to make Cyrus an Elamite in education and religion. The empire which he founded was not a Persian one; Darius, the son of Hystaspes, was the real founder of that. It was only as the predecessor of Darius, and for the sake of intelligibility to the readers of a later day, that Cyrus could be called a king of Persia as he is in the book of Ezra, where

[1] Jer. 49: 34-39.

Cylinder of Cyrus.

the original words of his proclamation, 'king of Elam,' have been changed into the more familiar and intelligible 'king of Persia.'[1] Elsewhere in the Bible,[2] where the invasion of Babylonia is described, there is no mention of Persia, only Elam and Media, that is to say, of the ancestral dominions of Cyrus and the kingdoms of Ekbatana which he had annexed. This is in strict accordance with the revelations of the monuments and is a most interesting testimony to the accuracy of the Old Testament records."[3]

The preparations made by Cyrus for the occupation of Babylon were also predicted. Elam and Media were to be united in the great undertaking, for the "*Lord raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes, for His device is against Babylon to destroy it.*" It was also predicted that other nations should enter the league and place their forces under the command of the "Lord's anointed." The prophet had said: "Set up the standard in the land; blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz. Lo, I will raise, and cause to come up against Babylon, an assembly of great nations from the north country." Keith quoting from Jackson, Grotius, Poole, Rollin, Xenophon and other authorities gives a syn-

[1] Ezra 1: 2. [2] Isa. 21: 1-10.
[3] "Fresh Light from Ancient Monuments," pp. 144, 145.

opsis of the preparation of Cyrus for taking Babylon. He subdued the Armenians, who had revolted against Media, spared their king, bound them over anew to their allegiance, by kindness rather than force, and incorporated their army with his own. He adopted the Hyrcanians, who had rebelled against Babylon, as allies with the Medes and Persians. He conquered the united forces of the Babylonians and Lydians, took Sardis, with Crœsus and all his wealth, spared his life, after he was at the stake, restored to him his family and household, received him into the number of his counselors and friends, and thus prepared the Lydians, over whom he reigned, and who were formerly combined with Babylon, for coming up against it. He overthrew also the Phrygians and Cappadocians, and added their armies in like manner to his accumulating forces. And by these successive alliances and conquests, by proclaiming liberty to the slaves, by a humane policy, consummate skill, a pure and noble disinterestedness, and a boundless generosity, he changed within twenty years a confederacy which the king of Babylon had raised up against the Medes and Persians, whose junction he feared, into a confederacy even of the same nations against Babylon itself; and thus a standard was set up against Babylon, kingdoms were summoned, prepared and gathered together against her; and an assembly of great

nations from the north,—including Ararat, and Minni, or the greater and lesser Armenia, and Ashchenaz, or according to Bochart, Phrygia,—was raised up and caused to come up against Babylon. Without their aid, and before they were subjected to his authority, he had attempted in vain to conquer Babylon; but when he had prepared and gathered them together, it was taken, though more by artifice than by power.

The accounts of the fall of Babylon given by the historians Xenophon and Herodotus tell how Cyrus surrounded the city and cast up a trench round about, and prepared for the final struggle. It is not to be understood that all the predictions of the prophets were fulfilled in the capture of the city by Cyrus. This was but the beginning of the end. While very many of the details of the predictions found their completion in Cyrus, others were not fulfilled until many years afterward. A day with the Lord is as a thousand years and a thousand years as a day, but whether it be a day or a thousand years, His judgments are sure and His words are true. The armies of Cyrus "camped against it round about. They put themselves in array against Babylon round about." As the prophet had predicted, so the enemies of Babylon came up against her and she was entirely surrounded by her enemies. But the people of the city gave them-

selves but little concern about their enemies. They trusted with absolute security in its mountain-like walls, its brazen gates, and its great moat encircling it like a river. Within the walls of the city were stored ample supplies of provisions for a siege of twenty years. Part of the land within the wall was used for raising grain, and this, irrigated by the Euphrates, produced three abundant crops each year. It is to this fact that Jeremiah refers when he says: "Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in time of harvest." [1] With abundant stores of food, and with the means inside the walls of constantly adding to their supplies, with impregnable walls which no human being could scale, with ponderous brazen gates strong enough to defy and resist the combined forces of Cyrus, with an unfailing water supply from the river which flowed through the city, no wonder that the king of Babylon, his nobles and his people laughed their enemies to scorn and spent their time in feasting and reveling.

The king and his lords, his nobles and his captains closed the gates of the city and remained "in their holds," giving themselves over to sensuality and luxurious living. Feasting and drunkenness did their work, "for the hands of the king of Babylon waxed feeble." Like king, like people, was as

[1] Jer. 50: 16.

true then as now. Gluttony, drunkenness, debauchery and sensual indulgence were the rule among all classes, and manly strength and courage departed from all alike, "their might failed, they became as women." Cyrus wisely chose the time of a great feast to enter the city. He knew that the king and his great men as well as his army would be overcome by drunkenness and that many of them would sleep, what was to be to them the perpetual sleep of death. The prophet had said: "And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, her rulers, and her mighty men, and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts." Whether Cyrus entered the city by turning the Euphrates from its course, as related by Herodotus, or whether the gates were opened to him by friends within the walls, the end came upon Babylon, as predicted by the prophets, and the gates were opened. Not a single brick of the great mountain-like wall was thrown down, not one of the hundred gates of the city was forced open. The gates were opened before the "Lord's anointed" and he entered the city in the night when all the people were reveling, many of them sleeping from the effects of strong drink and others in a state of imbecility from the same cause. Confusion and absolute lack of military caution prevailed everywhere. At once

the soldiers began an indiscriminate slaughter of the revelers. On passing without obstruction or hindrance into the city, slaying some, putting others to flight, and joining with the revelers as if slaughter had been merriment, they hastened by the shortest way to the palace, and reached it ere yet the messenger had told the king that the city was taken. The gates of the palace, which were strongly fortified, were shut. The guards stationed before them were drinking beside a blazing light when the Persians rushed impetuously upon them. The louder and altered clamor, no longer joyous, caught the ear of the inmates of the palace, and the bright light showed them the work of destruction, without revealing its cause. And, not aware of the presence of an enemy in the midst of Babylon, the king himself, excited by the warlike tumults at the gates, commanded those within to examine whence the tumult arose; and according to the same word, by which the gates (leading from the river to the city) *were not shut, the loins of kings were loosed to open before Cyrus the two-leaved gates.* At the sight of the opened gates of the palace of Babylon, the eager Persians sprang in. *The king of Babylon, heard the report of them—anguish took hold of him;* he and all who were about him perished: God had numbered his kingdom and finished it: it was divided and given to the Medes and Persians; the

lives of the Babylonian princes, and lords, and rulers, and captains closed with that night's festival: *the drunken slept a perpetual sleep and did not wake.* [1]

Isaiah and Jeremiah gave many particulars in their predictions, all of which were fulfilled to the letter in the capture of the city. It was said that "one post should run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show to the king of Babylon that his city was taken at one end, and that the passages were stopped." The king was in the city, reveling with his lords, and yet was ignorant of the fact that the place was taken. As the allied armies entered Babylon at both ends, or sides, at the same time, the messengers, or posts, hastened with all speed, from opposite directions, to the palace which was near the center, and met each other in conveying to the king the dire news that the city had fallen into the hands of his enemies. Then, too, the prophet had said: "I will fill thee with men as with caterpillars;" and, "All her slain shall fall in the midst of her." At Babylon Cyrus reviewed his victorious army numbering nearly a million of men, now within the city walls, where no enemy, save as captives, had ever marched before. Now came the hosts of the allied armies filling all the streets of Babylon as caterpillars. Before the

[1] Herodotus and Xenophon, by Keith.

city fell the Babylonians, secure within the great walls, refused to go out to fight against Cyrus; they remained within their holds and defied their enemies. In the siege none of them fell, but when the city was taken, in the midst of Babylon her king, her princes, her lords, and her mighty men were slain. Thus in every detail and particular were the predictions of the Bible accomplished.

The remarkable prophecy, in which the general was named who was to carry out God's purposes and to accomplish the overthrow of Babylon, is without parallel in the Divine Record. Isaiah prophesied about two hundred years before the city was taken; Josephus says two hundred and ten. The predictions were made between 798 and 760 B. C. and Babylon was taken by Cyrus about B. C. 538. Herodotus was born about B. C. 484 and it is not likely that he knew of the prophecies of the Hebrew seers, but in his history he confirms them in a very remarkable manner. Again it may be said that prophecy is history foretold; history is prophecy fulfilled. Isaiah and Jeremiah were the prophets, Herodotus and Xenophon the historians.

Babylon did not lose its greatness or power after it fell into the hands of Cyrus. He left it to his successor a magnificent city. Rebelling against Darius it was again subjugated, not by force of arms, but by the treachery of Zobryas, who was in

command of the troops within the walls. He opened the gates before the king, and the Persians entered the city, and again it was given over to massacre. It was taken a third time by Alexander the Great, who sought to restore it to its former greatness and glory and to make of it the central capital of his universal empire. But while the temple of Belus was being restored, and the embankments of the Euphrates repaired, the great conqueror died in the very prime of life, it is said in a drunken orgie. The man who had conquered the world failed to conquer himself. His attempt to restore Babylon signally failed. The decree of the Almighty, Lord of heaven and earth, had gone forth by the mouth of His prophet, "It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation." The indomitable will, the pride and ambition, and the unlimited resources of Alexander the Great were as nothing when they stood against the Word of the Lord. The very measures which he took to restore the city tended in the end to complete its destruction, for the canals which he dug assisted in flooding the land and making Babylon pools of water, and a home for the bittern. So God uses kings and conquerors to accomplish His purpose. The great Babylon, the joy of the whole earth, was buried by His hand, and her walls, and her temples, her mighty palaces and

magnificent residences have never been rebuilt, and when the last trump shall sound, and the mighty host of God shall be gathered together, the living and the dead, the once proud and wicked city shall be as it now is, a desolation without an inhabitant.

Seleucus, one of the successors of Alexander the Great, appointed Patrocles as governor of Babylon. He became greatly alarmed at the approach of an enemy, and abandoning the city he and his army fled to the desert, believing they would be more secure in the wilderness than within the walls of Babylon. Upon entering the city Demetrius found it deserted. From this time on its decay was rapid. Seleucia was built not far distant, and the greater part of its population abandoned the old for the new city. As the centuries passed away the remarkable words of Isaiah came to their entire fulfillment: "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation, neither shall the Arabian pitch his tent there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces."

This indeed was a bold prophecy, but it has been fulfilled to the letter. To say that a great city like Babylon should never be inhabited, doubtless seemed like a silly tale to its people; but to-day the prophecy is history, and even the "Arabian does not pitch his tent there." The wandering Arab, on the plains of Arabia, or in the valleys of Syria, spreads his tent where night overtakes him and lies down under its folds in safety; but when he nears Babylon, he times his journey to reach a khan at the close of the day.

The shepherd, no less fearful than the Arab, leads his flock through the marshes to feed through the day, but returns to the fortified khan ere sunset, thus confirming the prophetic words of Isaiah, "Neither shall shepherds make their folds there." In the fulfillment of the prophet's words, the ruins of Babylon have become a menagerie of wild beasts. Rauwolf, a German traveler who visited the ruined city in the sixteenth century, says of the temple of Belus: "This tower is full of venomous animals that can only be approached during the winter months when they do not leave their holes." A Carmelite monk passed the ruins in 1657 and "heard the roaring of the lions, which from time to time answered one another from the opposite shores of the river to our no small terror." In December, 1881, Mr. Rich, English consul at Bagdad, made

excavations among the ruins of Belshazzar's palace and says: "There are many dens of wild beasts in various parts, in one of which I found the bones of sheep and other wild animals, and perceived a strong smell, like that of a lion. I also found quantities of porcupine quills; and in most of the cavities are numbers of owls and bats."

Layard in his notes says: "In this section of country are to be found leopards, lynxes, wild cats, wolves, hyenas, jackals, deer, porcupine and other animals in vast numbers." Dr. Newman, who visited Babylon in 1876, says: "A large lion was in the habit of coming from the Euphrates to a canal which I crossed on my way to Babylon, till he was shot by one of the Arabs. Captain Cowley, of the steamer on which I came up the Tigris, shot three lions, which had their lair on an island nearly opposite the ruined city."

Mignan in his travels in the vicinity of Babylon was accompanied by six Arabs, all of whom were well armed, but when night came he could not induce them to remain in the neighborhood of what was once the joy of the whole earth. He says: "I could not induce them to remain toward night, from the apprehension of evil spirits. It is impossible to eradicate this idea from the minds of these people, who are very deeply imbued with superstition." Porter in his travels gives this description

of the mounds and heaps of Babylon: "The caverns, over which the chambers of majesty may have been spread, are now the refuge of jackals and other savage animals. The mouths of their entrances are strewed with the bones of sheep and goats; and the loathsome smell that proceeds from most of them is sufficient warning not to proceed into the den. Two or three majestic lions were seen upon its heights, and the broad prints of their feet were left plain in the clayey soil."

Major Keppel in his narrative has this to say about the ruins of Babylon: "The mound was full of holes; we entered some of them, and found them strewed with carcasses and skeletons of animals recently killed. The odor of wild beasts was so strong that prudence got the better of curiosity, for we had no doubt as to the savage nature of the inhabitants. Our guides, indeed, told us that all the ruins abounded in lions and other wild beasts; so literally has the divine prediction been fulfilled that wild beasts of the desert should lie there, and their houses be full of doleful creatures; that the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses."

Of the gradual decline of Babylon Keith has to say that about the beginning of the Christian era a small portion of it was inhabited, and far the greater part was cultivated. It diminished as Se-

leucia increased and became the larger city. In the second century nothing but its walls remained. It became gradually a great desert, and in the fourth century its walls, repaired for that purpose, formed the enclosure for wild beasts, and Babylon was converted into a field for the chase, a hunting place for the pastime of the Persian monarchs. The name and remnant were cut off from Babylon; and there is a blank, during the interval of many ages, in the history of its mutilated remains and mouldering decay. It remained long in the possession of the Saracens; and abundant evidence has been given that every feature of its prophesied desolation is now distinctly visible, for the most ancient historians bore not a clearer testimony to the facts confirmatory of the prophecies relative to its first siege and capture by Cyrus, than the latest travelers bear to the fulfillment of those which refer to its final permanent ruin. The identity of its site has been completely established. And the truth of every general and every particular prediction is now so clearly demonstrated that a simple exhibition of the facts precludes the possibility of any cavil, and supersedes the necessity of any reasoning on the subject.

In concluding this chapter, in view of the testimony already given, may not the question be pertinently asked, Has not every prediction made by

the prophets of the Lord concerning Babylon been literally fulfilled? Has not every purpose of the Lord been performed? Where is there a spot on the earth that has undergone such a complete change? Jerusalem is being rebuilt and is inhabited, but Babylon is the very picture of desolation even unto this day. Its ruins have been, and are now being most carefully searched by scholars and investigators from America and Europe, and every new discovery only adds to the evidence that every prediction concerning Babylon has been fulfilled. And so the Bible narrative, after all the tests that have been applied to it by honest critics and dishonest infidels, stands, the one Book alone of all books that cannot be moved. And well may it stand, for it was written by the finger of God.

CHAPTER TEN.

Prophecies Concerning Nineveh and Tyre.

Woe to the bloody city! it is full of lies and robbery. Thy crowned are as the locust, and thy captains as the great grasshoppers, which camp in the hedges in a cold day, but when the sun ariseth they flee away, and their place is not known where they are.—Nah. 3: 1, 17.

Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up.—Ezek. 26: 3.

To write even a brief sketch of the predictions of the Bible, and their fulfillment would be to write volumes of history. The burden of prophecy was taken up against many of the ancient cities of the Bible lands, and in every particular the prophecies have been fulfilled. Reference might be made to Memphis, Thebes, Heliopolis, Damascus, Samaria, Shiloh, Jericho, and many others, but we must content ourselves with brief mention of Nineveh the city of blood, and Tyre the city of merchants.

East of the Tigris, and north of its junction with the Zab, was the great city to which Jonah was sent by the Lord. It is true that the prophet traveled in a contrary direction, by way of Joppa and a ship on the Great Sea, but he finally reached the city to which he had been sent and cried in its streets, "Yet forty days

and Nineveh shall be overthrown." The king and his people heard the warning, repented, and the doom of the city was averted for the time. "Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey."[1] The earliest record we have of the place is to be found in the tenth chapter of Genesis, "Out of that land went forth Asshur and builded Nineveh." This occurred, probably, 2182 B. C. The building of Nineveh marked the founding of the great Assyrian empire which dominated the East for many centuries with a rod of iron. It continued in power until about B. C. 600, or more than fifteen hundred years; a duration of empire without parallel in the history of nations.

Nineveh was the capital of Assyria and in its most prosperous days contained over six hundred thousand inhabitants. Strabo states that it was even larger than Babylon, and Calmet says, "It must be owned that Nineveh was one of the most ancient, the most famous, the most potent, and the largest cities of the world." Herodotus tells of the great height of its walls and its mighty towers filled with soldiers, of whom over six hundred thousand were quartered in the city at one time.

The prophet of the Lord named Nineveh well when he called it "the bloody city." The record of the cruelties practiced upon their captives by the kings of Assyria is not exceeded by like records in history.

[1] Jonah 3: 3.

They were great warriors and brought vast numbers of captives to their capital, and these were subjected to tortures too horrible to relate. Sennacherib in one notable expedition against his enemies brought two hundred thousand prisoners to Nineveh. Sargon raised a mound outside of the city with the skulls of prisoners taken in war, and it is recorded on one of the ancient tablets that Sennacherib salted and packed the heads of his captives in baskets for the same purpose. One of the records found in recent excavations reads as follows: "Three thousand of their captives I consigned to the flames; as hostages I left none of them alive. Hulai, the governor of their town, I captured by my hand alive; their corpses into piles I built; their boys and maidens I dishonored; Hulai, the governor of their city, I flayed, his skin on the walls of Damdamusa I placed in contempt. . . . Many soldiers I captured alive, of some I chopped off the hands and feet, of others the noses and ears I cut off; of many soldiers I destroyed the eyes; one pile of bodies while yet alive, and one of heads I reared up on the heights within their town."[1]

"Woe to the bloody city, for she is full of lies and robbery," and her sins and cruelty reach unto heaven. But the day of retribution was rapidly approaching, the cup of her wickedness and heartless cruelty was filled to the brim and was running over. When the

[1] Rodwell, "Records of the Past," vol. III., pp. 49-51.

kings of Nineveh had become a terror to all the rulers of the East, when the very name of the city struck terror to the hearts of the surrounding nations, when her cruelties and her mad revelings in the blood of her helpless captives reached unto heaven, the end came. "Woe to the bloody city; fear her not, for God is against her." Just sixty years after the prophet of Judea lifted up his voice in predictions against Nineveh, the end came, the city was taken by storm and destroyed. So complete was its destruction that three hundred years later Alexander the Great fought the battle of Arbela near the former site of Nineveh, but saw no trace of the city. For twenty-three centuries it was lost to the sight of man; then Niebuhr was sent to explore, if possible, the ruins of the ancient city, and he passed over it, unaware that he was treading above its buried streets. How literally were the words of the prophet verified: "And He will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. And the flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds: for He shall uncover the cedar work. This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a

place for every beast to lie down in! every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand." [1]

The prophet Nahum opens his book with these words: "The burden of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite," and his prophecy contained in three short chapters refers directly to the

Drinking Scene from Rawlinson's Five Great Monarchies.

destruction of Nineveh. The Ninevites were not only a cruel, bloodthirsty people, but were also given to much wine, and drunkenness was prevalent among them. The excavations of the ruins of the ancient city have brought to light abundant proof of this fact,

[1] Zeph. 2: 13-15.

which is confirmatory of the Bible statement. Speaking of their drinking banquets Rawlinson says: "The arrangement of their banquets is curious. The guests, who are in one instance some forty or fifty in number, instead of being received at a common table, are divided into messes of four, who sit together, two and two, facing each other, each mess having its own table and its own attendant. The guests are all clothed in long tasseled gowns, over which they wear the deeply fringed cross belt. They have sandals on their feet, and on their arms armlets and bracelets. They sit on high stools, from which their legs dangle; but in no case have they footstools, which would apparently have been a great convenience. Most of the guests are bearded men, but intermixed with them we see a few eunuchs. Every guest holds in his right hand a wine cup of a most elegant shape, the lower part modeled into the form of a lion's head, from which the cup itself rises in a graceful curve. They all raise their cups to a level with their heads, and look as if they were pledging each other, or else one and all drinking the same toast. In the banqueting scenes from which the above descriptions are chiefly taken, it is shown that the Assyrians, like the Egyptians and the Greeks in heroic times, had the entertainment of music at their grand feasts and drinking bouts. At one end of the long series of figures representing guests and attendants was a band of performers, at least three in

number, two of whom certainly played upon the lyre. The lyres were ten stringed, of a square shape, and hung around the player's neck by a string or riband." [1] It will be observed that the table in the engraving is bare of food. On the tables are a rude-shaped crescent, and a peculiar article which Rawlinson supposes to be an emblem of royalty. The scene represents a drinking bout, and the large cups are an evidence of the great amount of wine that was consumed. It was the custom to drink until all were drunken. The prophet said: "For while they be folded together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry." [2] Diodorus, the Greek historian, describes in detail how this prediction was fulfilled. He tells how the king of Assyria, elated over the great success attending his victorious army, and ignorant of the real strength of his enemies, and especially of the rebellion of the Bactrians, appointed a great festival and furnished his soldiers with such abundance of wine that all had more than they could drink. As a result his army, with its officers, were all soon "drunken as drunkards." In the midst of their debauchery, the enemy, apprised of their condition, fell upon them, destroyed the greater part of them, and drove the rest out of the city. They were devoured even as stubble fully dry. The same author states that the king of Nineveh, finding that his city

[1] "Five Great Monarchies," pp. 579, 580. [2] Nahum 1: 10.

had fallen into the hands of his enemies, and having in mind the ancient prophecy that the place should be destroyed, made a great "funeral pile, on which he heaped his wealth, and with which himself, his household, and palace, were consumed."

Nahum also prophesied that Nineveh should be destroyed by fire and flood. It is a record of history that the river wall of the city, attacked by the flooded waters of the Tigris, fell to the ground, and thus were the gates of the river opened and the palace was dissolved. What escaped the flood was destroyed by the fire and the sword. "There shall the fire devour thee; the sword shall cut thee off, it shall eat thee up like the canker worm." Recent discoveries at Nineveh show that the fire played a formidable part in the utter destruction of the city. Thus were the just judgments of heaven visited upon the "bloody city," and upon its people who reveled in sin and wickedness, and whose cruelty and barbarity is without parallel in the annals of history.

The excavation at Nineveh carried forward by Mr. Layard, beginning in 1849, and still continued by the University of Pennsylvania, has revealed not only the exact fulfillment of prophecy, but has verified in many instances the Bible records. The dust and the stones of the ancient city have spoken in unmistakable terms, giving abundant proof of the Bible narrative. In excavating, the royal palace of Sennach-

erib was discovered and uncovered, and the portion built of brick and stone still remains as a witness of the magnitude of the king's residence. Here was also found the royal library, the books made of clay in the shape of tablets and cylinders, and the inscriptions made while the clay was soft. After being inscribed the tablets were glazed and burned in ovens prepared for the purpose, and then placed in the king's library, where they remained undisturbed for nearly twenty-five centuries. More than twenty thousand of these terra cotta books have been rescued from their burial place and are now to be found in the British Museum. Here are to be found records of campaigns and battles merely hinted at in the Bible, and wherever the Bible accounts and these old records come in touch with each other, they fit together as a tenon cut for a mortise.

The Bible tells briefly that Sennacherib captured the city of Lachish, and among the ancient tablets found in Nineveh is a complete record, and a full description of the campaign. It tells how the city was besieged and taken and what cruelties were visited upon the inhabitants and how the captives were tortured to death.

Isaiah gives a record of the downfall of Ashdod in the following words: "In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, (when Sargon the king of Assyria

sent him,) and fought against Ashdod and took it." [1] In the fourth verse he refers to the fact that its garrison was composed of Egyptians and Ethiopians. Every record of the great Assyrian monarch, save this one contained in the Bible, was lost. No history even contained his name. The excavations revealed not only an account of Sargon, but also an account of the taking of Ashdod. Sargon says: "In my ninth expedition to the land beside the great sea, I went to Philistia and Ashdod. Azuri, king of Ashdod, hardened his heart not to bring tribute, and sent enemies of Assyria to the kings round him and did evil. I broke his dominion, . . . and the cities of Ashdod and Gimzo of the Ashdodites I besieged and captured." Here is a wonderful confirmation of God's Word.

The Bible gives an account of the invasion of Judea by Sennacherib, and of the amount of tribute paid by Hezekiah to gain the favor of that great king. The old tablets reveal the following account of the invasion, written by Sennacherib himself: "Because Hezekiah would not submit to my yoke, I came up against him, and by force of arms and by the might of my power, I took forty-six of his strong-fenced cities; and of the smaller towns which were scattered about I took and plundered a countless number.

[1] Isa. 20: 1.

And from these places I took and carried off as spoil 200,150 people, old and young, male and female, together with horses and mares, asses and camels, oxen and sheep a countless multitude. And Hezekiah himself I shut up in Jerusalem like a bird in a cage, building towers around the city to hem him in, and raising banks of earth against the gates to prevent his escape. Then upon this Hezekiah there fell the fear of my arms, and he sent out to me the chiefs and elders of Jerusalem with thirty talents of gold and eight hundred talents of silver, and divers treasures, a rich and immense booty. All these things were brought to me at Nineveh the seat of my government, Hezekiah having them sent by way of tribute, and as a token of his submission to my power." Compare the simple Bible record with the boasting record of the Assyrian king: "Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them. And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the

king's house. At that time did Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the Lord, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria."[1] The remarkable agreement between the Assyrian record and the Bible narrative is a wonderful coincidence of historic records and is a strong proof of the great accuracy of the Bible. It is not at all surprising that the boasting Assyrian should have increased, in his account, the amount received as tribute, and that he should have placed in the same record the number of prisoners and the prey taken from other cities on the same victorious expedition.

Again Sennacherib invaded Judea, but no boasting record is left of that campaign. The Bible tells of it in this language: "And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp of the Assyrians, a hundred, four score and five thousand." The boasting Assyrian left no record of his terrible defeat. He had no desire to preserve the memory of his overthrow. The records are as silent as the one hundred and eighty-five thousand unburied Assyrian corpses which he left to the vultures and the hyenas of Syria. One of Byron's most beautiful melodies was written on the overthrow of Sennacherib. We give it below in full:

[1] 2 Kings 18: 14, 15.

"The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

"Like the leaves of the forest when the summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

"For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still.

"And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride,
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And as cold as the spray on the rock beating surf,

"And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances uplifted, the trumpets unblown.

"And the widows of Asshur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temples of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord."

The Bible informs us of the murder of Sennacherib by his two elder sons, but gives no clue as to the motive of the murderers. The clay tablets reveal the motives. Here is a translation of the king's will, taken from tablets now in the British Museum: "Sennacherib, king of multitudes, king of Assyria,

has given chains of gold, stores of ivory, a cup of gold, crowns and chains besides, all the riches, of which there are heaps, crystals and other precious stones, and bird's stone; one and a half manehs, two and a half cibi according to their weight, to Esar-haddon, my son." The elder brothers, jealous of the favored younger son, rebelled and slew their father. The Bible reference to the event is very brief. It says: "And it came to pass, as Sennacherib was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adram-elech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword," [1]

In the Bible we are informed that Manasseh was carried in chains by the king of Assyria to Babylon. But Babylon was not the capital of Assyria, and why should the king desert Nineveh, his own capital, for Babylon? A parallel case would be found if Bismarck, in the Franco-Prussian war, had carried his prisoners to London. Here, at last, the critics concluded that they had discovered a notable error in the Bible record; but before they had ceased emphasizing the supposed inaccuracy, the excavated monuments and the library revealed the fact that this same king, Esar-haddon, had made Babylon his royal residence, and that the Bible narrative was strictly true.

[1] 2 Kings 19: 37.

The Destruction of the City of Tyre.

It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God: and it shall become a spoil to the nations.—Ezek. 26: 5.

Six hundred years before the coming of Christ the prophet Ezekiel took up the burden of prophecy against Tyre, the city of merchants, and foretold its utter destruction. It was the great metropolis of the Levant, the most celebrated city in the world, and the business emporium of the Orient. Volney describes it in these words: "It was the theater of an immense commerce and navigation, the nursery of the arts and sciences, and the city of perhaps the most industrious and active people known. It stood easily at the head of commerce, and Carthage, the rival of Rome, was one of its colonies. Its sails whitened every port then open to navigation, and merchant princes and captains of industry grew rich in their trade with all parts of the known world." If one would know the greatness of the city let him read Ezekiel's description and learn how Tyre was wholly given to money-making and pleasure-seeking.

Keith says that while Tyre was the mart of nations and in its opulence and power, and at least one hundred and twenty-five years before the destruction of old Tyre, Isaiah pronounced its irrevocable fall. Tyre on the island succeeded to the more ancient city on the continent: and—being inhabited by the same

people, retaining the same name, and being removed but a little space, and occupying in part the same ground—the fate of both is included in the prophecy. The pride and wickedness of the Tyrians, their exultation over the calamities of the Israelites, and their cruelty in selling them to slavery, are assigned as the reasons of the judgments that were to overtake them, or as the causes of the revelation of the destiny of their city. And the whole fate of Tyre was foretold.

Ezekiel's description of the commerce, riches, and pride of Tyre, the ancient queen of the ocean, is designated by Volney a valuable historical fragment; and he cites the words, as he terms it, "in all their prophetic enthusiasm." But the prophet denounced its doom before he described its splendor and power; and he traced its future history, with all the precision of truth, till the city that was perfect in beauty became a place whereon fishers spread their nets, till the stones and timbers of its superb dwellings were cast into the midst of the waters, and the very dust was scraped from off the place where the princely merchants gloried in their pride, and heaped up their silver and gold. The marvelous facts which Ezekiel and other prophets foretold give to observant readers a full and complete prophetic history of the downfall and ruin of Tyre. In every detail the prophecy has been literally fulfilled.

These are the words of the prophet when Tyre was in the height of her power and pride: "Because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people: she is turned unto me: I shall be replenished, now she is laid waste: therefore saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and I will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of

Fishermen Spreading Nets at Modern Tyre.

Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be the place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God: and it shall become a spoil to the nations." [1]

Against Tyre came the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar, and later the Greeks under Alexander the

[1] Ezek. 26: 2-5.

Great. The city was entirely destroyed by the latter after a most remarkable siege, and one of the most singular events in history was the manner in which the great conqueror conducted the siege against Tyre. History records the fact that the general, becoming irritated that "a single city should oppose his victorious march, enraged at the murder of some of his soldiers, and fearful of his fame, even his army despairing of success could not deter him from the siege." And Tyre was taken in this manner, the success of which was more wonderful than the design was daring: for it was surrounded by a wall one hundred and fifty feet in height, and situated on an island half a mile distant from the shore. A mound was formed from the continent to the island; and the ruins of old Tyre afforded ready materials for the purpose. Such was the work that the attempt at first defeated the power of Alexander. The enemy consumed and the storm destroyed it. But its remains, buried beneath the waters, formed a barrier which rendered successful his renewed efforts. A vast mass of additional matter was requisite. The soil and the very rubbish were gathered and heaped. And the mighty conqueror, who afterward failed in raising again any of the ruins of Babylon, cast those of Tyre into the sea, and took her very DUST from off her. And so the words of the prophet were lit-

erally fulfilled, for they laid her stones, and her timber and her dust in the midst of the water. [1]

It is not an easy matter to destroy a great city, the center of the trade and commerce of nations. Nothing short of a complete revolution can bring about such a result. In 1884 New York city was destroyed by fire, but it was speedily rebuilt and became greater and larger than ever. In 1871 Chicago was burned with a mighty conflagration, but she rose, Phœnix-like, from her ashes, and to-day has a population of two million souls. These cities were the centers of trade and commerce, and it is a very difficult matter to blot a city of this kind out of existence.

No doubt the merchants of Tyre thought the same of their great city, and laughed the words of the prophet to scorn. The ancient city was destroyed. More than two thousand years have passed away since the conqueror laid her dust and timbers and stone in the midst of the waters of the sea and put an end to her greatness, and the city has never been rebuilt.

Travelers who visit the modern fishing town of Tyre are deeply impressed with the description of the former greatness of the place as compared with its present condition. Maundrell says: "You find here no similitude of that glory for which it was so renowned in ancient times. You see nothing here but a mere Babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults, etc.

[1] Ezek. 26: 12.

Its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches, harboring themselves in the vaults, and subsisting chiefly on fishing, who seem to be preserved in this place by divine providence, as a visible argument how God hath fulfilled His word concerning Tyre." Bruce and Shaw both tell of the fishermen who dry their nets on the rocks by the sea. The latter says: "The port of Tyre, small as it is at present, is choked up to that degree with sand and rubbish, that the boats of those fishermen who now and then visit this once renowned emporium, and dry their nets upon its rocks and ruins, can with great difficulty only be admitted." Volney in his "Ruined Cities" has this to say about the place: "The whole village of Tyre contains only fifty or sixty poor families who live obscurely on the produce of their little ground and a trifling fishery." Since Volney wrote, the place has grown to be a considerable village, but not a mark of its former greatness is to be seen. As you walk along the seashore and see the fishermen spread their nets on the rocks from which the dust has been scraped, you are reminded that God in His own time and in His own way brings to pass the words of His prophets, and you are forced to exclaim, What abundant evidence is here given of the inspiration of God's Holy Book.

CHAPTER ELEVEN.

Prophecies Concerning the Coming of Christ.

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between her seed and thy seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.—Gen. 3: 4.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.—Isa. 9: 6, 7.

From the record of the fall of Adam to the closing of the Old Testament history, by the prophet Malachi, the Bible is full of prophecies concerning the coming of the Savior of mankind. The Book contains no less than three hundred and sixty-six prophecies all of which meet, in all their details and particulars, and find their actual fulfillment in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Within the scope of this work it is not possible to allude to all of these prophecies even in the very briefest manner. We must therefore satisfy ourselves with a very brief examination of some of the more prominent as showing how clearly they prove the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. Jesus said: "Search the Scriptures; for

in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me." John 5: 39. The reader, it is hoped, will be induced to search the Scriptures, both Old and New, to learn how clearly they testify of Christ.

Four thousand years before the birth of Christ came the promise from God to the fallen race that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and from that time on down the centuries the prophets of the Lord, looking into the future, kept adding prophecy upon prophecy, and detail upon detail, until hundreds of lines of predictions—all pointing to Christ—were given. From Moses to Malachi all center in the cross, all find fulfillment in Jesus of Nazareth. Let us look at the particulars, and examine the details, and see how wonderfully the words of prophecy have been fulfilled. Beginning with his genealogy,—for even this was made the subject of prophecy,—we have the call of the patriarch Abraham and the promise made to him in God's own words, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;" the selection of Isaac, "the child of promise," the choosing of Jacob, and the prediction that the sceptre should not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver cease from among his descendants till Shiloh should come.[1] It was also predicted that from the midst of the Israelites the Lord should "raise

[1] Gen. 49: 10.

up unto thee a Prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto Me; unto Him shall ye hearken." This Prophet was to come from the tribe of Judah and of the house of David. "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall be upon Him."[1] He was to judge the people not by seeing or hearing, but in righteousness was He to render judgment, and the Gentiles were also to seek after Him. The prophet Jeremiah particularly predicts that the Messiah should come from the house of David. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."[2]

And so in the fullness of time, according to God's purpose, there was born at Bethlehem, unto the tribe of Judah in the direct line of descent of the house of David, the stem of Jesse, a Child whose name was called Jesus. In Him, and in Him alone, do all these prophecies meet and find their fulfillment. In Him, and in Him alone, of all the descendants of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, of the house of Da-

[1] Isa. 11: 1-10. [2] Jer. 23: 5, 6.

vid, can all the nations of the earth be blessed. After Him, and after Him alone, do the Gentiles seek. Who is this Branch of the lineage of David? He is Christ, the King, the Savior of the world.

But not only was the genealogy of Christ pointed out, but the country in which He was to be born was named. The southern part of Syria was selected for this important event, and with the naming of the country one would think the prophets would have rested content. But God gave them details and particulars and told them that the land of Canaan, in a twofold sense the land of promise, was set apart for the nativity of the Son of God. But Palestine was divided into three parts: Samaria, Galilee and Judea, and the prophet pointed out the land of Judah, a territory not larger than the counties in some of our States. But this was not enough, and the very village in which Christ was to be born was chosen and named. There were hundreds of cities and villages in Judea at the time of the birth of the Son of God, but little Bethlehem, six miles from Jerusalem, was selected, and its full name—Bethlehem Ephratah—given because there were several villages in Judea at that time called Bethlehem. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose

goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." [1]

The decree of Cæsar had gone forth seven years before this time, when Cyrenias was governor of Syria, that the whole world should be taxed. The time had come when the Virgin should bring forth her child, the Son of God, and the whole world was put in motion to bring Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, where Christ was to be born according to prophecy. As the shepherds watched their flocks by night on the plains about the peaceful village, the angelic choir announced the birth of the Son of God, and the predictions of forty centuries were fulfilled.

And then, too, the place of the birth of the Messiah was not only designated in prophetical language, but the time of His coming was predicted so that the date of His advent was fixed. A period of time was set from the giving of the command to restore Jerusalem under Ezra to the coming of Messiah the Prince: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Mes-

[1] Micah 5: 2.

siah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself: and the people of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." [1]

This remarkable prophecy, which has been the occasion of much comment, is undoubtedly Messianic in its character, referring to the coming of Christ, His death and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. In foretelling the destruction of the Holy City our Lord refers to the prophecy Himself in these words: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place." While a difference of opinion obtains as to some of the details of the prophecy, yet in the main it is held to refer to the Messiah. Let us very briefly look at some of the details of the prediction.

The Jews had Sabbatic years (Lev. 25: 8) by which they divided time into weeks of years, as in this important prophecy, each week containing seven years. The seventy weeks, therefore, here spoken of amount to four hundred and ninety years. Six events

[1] Dan. 9: 24-26.

are mentioned in verse twenty-four, all of which find their fulfillment in Christ. These are:

First. To finish the transgression; which was effected by the preaching of the Gospel, and the pouring out of the Holy Ghost among men.

Second. To make an end of sins, or rather to make an end of sin offerings, which our Lord did when He offered His spotless soul and body on the cross once for all. He became the one great sin offering for the whole world.

Third. To make reconciliation, atonement or expiation for iniquity, which He did by offering up Himself for the sins of the human race.

Fourth. To bring in everlasting righteousness; that is, the righteousness or the Righteous One of the ages, Jesus, who had been the object of the faith of mankind, and the subject of the predictions of the prophets through all the ages.

Fifth. To seal up, to finish or complete the vision and prophecy; that is, to put an end to any further necessity of revelation. Christ, the fulfillment of prophecy, and in Him God's last revelation to the children of men.

Sixth. To anoint the Most Holy. The evident meaning here is the consecration or appointment of our blessed Lord to be the Holy One of Israel, to be Prophet, Priest and King of mankind.

The language in the twenty-fifth verse, "From the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem," marks the beginning of the years of weeks, or of the period of four hundred and ninety years. There is a general agreement that Christ was crucified at the passover in the month of Nisan in the year 4790 of the Julian period, or precisely four hundred and ninety years after Ezra had received his commission from Artaxerxes, king of Persia, to restore and rebuild Jerusalem.

It would be most interesting to follow the details and particulars of this remarkable prophecy further, but space forbids. The reader is referred to the works of Dean Prideaux, a most learned writer on this subject, from whom these facts and reflections on the subject have, for the most part, been drawn. It is enough for our purpose that the time of the advent of our Lord was predicted with unerring certainty by the prophet of God more than five hundred years before the Babe of Bethlehem was born.

But the fixing of the date of His coming, and the birthplace of Christ did not exhaust the predictions concerning our Lord. He was to be the desire of all nations, the Messenger of the covenant; and the Lord whom they sought was to come to the second temple, and impart to it, by his presence, a greater glory than the former had known.[1] A mes-

[1] Haggai 2: 7-9.

senger was to appear before Him, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, to prepare His way,[1] and when the prescribed time was at hand for the coming of the Messiah, at the commencement of the Christian era, before Jesus began His public ministry, a messenger did appear to prepare His way, in the person of John the Baptist. Of this messenger of the Lord, Josephus, the historian, says he was a preacher of great virtue; that he taught righteousness and piety; that he baptized those who accepted his doctrines; that he was received well by all the people; that Herod through fear of him imprisoned and put him to death, and that Herod was living unlawfully with Herodias, his brother's wife.[2]

The circumstances attending the birth of our Lord, His active ministry, what He said and did, and His character, are to be found in the history of His life given by the four evangelists. No other life, no other character like His, has ever found portrayal in this world. Divine inspiration was required to tell the story of the life of Christ, and of a character both divine and human in its nature. Of Him one of the great poets has said: "If ever God was man, or man God, Christ was both." Turning again to the prophets we read the predictions concerning the life and character of our Lord and find that the word of prophecy is no less sure in this than in other

[1] Isa. 40: 3.

[2] Josephus' Antiquities, book 18, chap. 5, sec. 2.

events connected with the coming, the life, and the death of the Messiah.

To quote all the prophecies pertaining to the life and work of Jesus would be to go far beyond the limit of space allotted in this work. The reader must be content with a brief mention of some of them. "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears: but with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. . . . And righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins.[1] . . . Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into Thy lips: therefore God hath blessed Thee forever. . . . The sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows."[2] "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."[3] . . . "Behold My servant, whom I uphold, Mine

[1] Isa. 11: 2-5. [2] Psa. 45: 2, 6, 7. [3] Isa. 40: 11.

elect, in whom My soul delighteth; I have put My spirit upon Him; He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth judgment unto truth."[1] . . . "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee; He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."[2] . . . "He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth."[3] . . . "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth."[4] . . . "I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to those who plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spittting."[5] . . . "For He shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also and him that hath no helper. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in His sight. His name shall endure forever: His name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed."[6] . . . "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the

[1] Isa. 42: 1-3.
[2] Zech. 9: 9.
[3] Isa. 53: 9.
[4] Isa. 53: 7.
[5] Isa. 50: 6.
[6] Psa. 72: 12, 14, 17.

chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."[1]

One reads and rereads and studies these and other like prophecies concerning the character, the life and work of our Lord with a feeling of wonder to see how clearly and forcibly the former points out and portrays the latter, and then there is great rejoicing in the heart that God has not left us without abundant evidence of the truth of His Book.

What is true of the life of Jesus is also true of His humiliation, suffering, and death. So many of the events connected with the passion week are minutely predicted and are all found fulfilled in the suffering and death of the Redeemer. His betrayal for thirty pieces of silver; His bitter and cruel mockery; His being spit upon; His inhuman scourging; the piercing of His hands and feet and side; the vinegar and gall offered Him on the cross; the parting of His raiment, and casting lots for His outer garment; His being cut off from His people; His death upon the cross; the unbroken bones of His mangled, broken body; His burial in the tomb of a rich man; His resurrection from the dead without His body seeing corruption,—all these were clearly predicted and literally fulfilled in Christ.

"The last three verses of the fifty-second, and the whole of the fifty-third of Isaiah—written above sev-

[1] Isa. 53: 5.

en hundred years before the Christian era, and forming, word for word, a part of the Jewish as well as the Christian Scriptures—prophetically describe, like a very history of the facts, the suffering and death of Christ; His rejection by the Jews; His humility, His meekness, His affliction, and His agony; how His words were disbelieved; how His state was lowly; how His sorrow was severe; how His visage and form were marred more than the sons of men; how He opened not His mouth but to make intercession for the transgressors. In direct opposition to every dispensation of Providence, which is registered in the records of the Jews, this prophecy represents spotless innocence suffering by the appointment of heaven—death as the issue of perfect obedience—God's righteous servant as forsaken by Him—and one who was perfectly immaculate bearing the chastisement of many guilty—sprinkling many nations from their iniquity by virtue of His sacrifice—justifying many by His knowledge—and dividing a portion with the great, and the spoil with the strong, because He had poured out His soul unto death."

Speaking of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, Paley says that the material part of every argument from prophecy, namely, that the words alleged were actually spoken or written before the fact to which they applied took place, or could by any natural means be foreseen, is, in the present instance, incontestable.

The record comes out of the custody of adversaries. The Jews, as an ancient father well observed, are our librarians. The passage is in their copies of the Scriptures, as well as ours. With many attempts to explain it away, none has ever been made by them to discredit its authenticity.

And, what adds force to the quotation is that it is taken from the declaredly prophetic part and is a writing professing to describe such future transactions and changes in the world as were connected with the fate and interests of the Jewish nation. It is not a passage in an historical or devotional composition, which because it turns out to be applicable to some future events, or to some future situation of affairs, is presumed to have been oracular. The words of Isaiah were delivered by him in a prophetic character, with the solemnity belonging to that character; and what he so delivered was all along understood by the Jewish reader to refer to something that was to take place after the time of the author. The public sentiments of the Jews concerning the design of Isaiah's writings are set forth in the book of Ecclesiasticus:[1] "He saw by an excellent spirit what should come to pass at the last, and comforted them that mourned in Zion. He showed what should come to pass forever, and the secret things or ever they came."[2]

[1] Eccles. 48: 24, 25.

[2] Paley's Evidences, pp. 314, 315.

Referring to the prophecies concerning Christ Keith says the time determined on the people and on the holy city, seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, passed away. The tribe of Judah were no longer united under a king. Banished from their own land, and subjected to every oppression, there was no more a lawgiver of the tribe of Judah, though Judah was he whom his brethren were to serve. Of the temple, one stone was not left on another. The sacrifice and oblation, which none but priests could offer, altogether ceased, when the Jews had no temple, nor country, nor priest, nor altar. Ere Jerusalem was destroyed, or desolation had passed over the land of Judea, the expectation was universal among the Jews that Messiah would appear; and heathen as well as Jewish historians testify of the belief then prevalent over the whole East that the ancient prophecies bore a direct and express reference to that very time.

Why, then, were so many prophecies delivered? Why, from the calling of Abraham to the present time, have the Jews been separated, as a peculiar people, from all the nations of the earth? Why, from the age of Moses to that of Malachi, during a space of a thousand years, did a succession of prophets arise, all testifying of a Savior to come? Why was the book of prophecy sealed for nearly four hundred years before the coming of Christ? Why is there still, to

this day, undisputed, if not miraculous, evidence of the antiquity of all these prophecies, by their being sacredly preserved, in every age, in the custody of the enemies of Christianity? Why was such a multitude of facts foretold that are applicable to Christ, and to Him alone? Why?—but that all this mighty preparation might usher in the Gospel of righteousness, and prepare the way for the kingdom of God; and that the Christians also, in every age, to their "peace and joy in believing," might add the perfect trust that, however great the promises of God may be, they are still sure; and that He who spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, will with Him also, if His we be, freely give us all things. And if we ever read a book for any object, ought we not to search the Scriptures, to see how clearly they testify of Christ? And ought not every word of such testimony to be, like all Scripture besides, profitable for doctrine and for instruction in righteousness? Let no one any longer refrain from searching the Scriptures, to see how they testify of Jesus, or from seeking the words of eternal life which may be found in them. Let each one lay to heart the thought that the second coming of Christ, to judge the quick and the dead, is as certain as that the prophetic tidings of His first advent—once heard afar off—have already proved true.

And as we search the Scriptures and study the Word of God we shall find not only the predictions of the coming of the Savior of the world, but also that in God's own time, in the day of all days, He will judge all the nations of the earth, and every man shall receive according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil. The absolute certainty of the coming of the judgment day should cause men everywhere to repent and prepare for its coming. And "what shall be said of the folly, presumption, recklessness, that pay no heed to the prophetic Word of God? That sure Word of Prophecy in clear terms foretells, beyond the certain day of death, a day when time shall be no longer; when earth shall be wrapped in a winding sheet of dissolving flames; when earth and sea shall give up their dead, and the great white throne shall flash upon the gaze of countless hosts of our humanity—when the books shall be opened, and the dead judged! Have you made ready for that day? In that storm whose thunders rend the earth and shake the sky—whose floods sweep away the last refuge of lies and sin—will your house stand, or fall forever?"[1]

[1] Pierson's "Many Infallible Proofs," p. 47.

CHAPTER TWELVE.

The Miracles of the New Testament.

Jesus Christ of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him, in the midst of you, as you yourselves know.—Acts 2: 22.

No statements in the New Testament are so well attested as are the miracles performed by our Lord. The apostle, in the words above quoted, states, in an intensified expression, facts so well known that his statement bears all the force of a challenge boldly given to the multitudes whom he addressed. It is as if he had said, Jesus Christ, a man from God, shown forth, confirmed and approved as the Messiah among you, God placing His seal of approval upon Him by working through Him miracles and signs and wonders. You were eyewitnesses to these miracles, for they were not done in a corner, or performed in secret. In your synagogues, in the streets of your cities, on your highways, in your villages and in the presence of great multitudes He spake and wrought as no other man ever did. In your very presence He fed thousands with a morsel of bread and meat, and some of you ate at that feast; you witnessed the raising of the dead, not only once but thrice repeated, you heard the dumb speak and saw the eyes of the blind opened, for you cast one out

of the synagogue who came seeing; you know that He cleansed the lepers, for they came to you in the temple to offer the gifts commanded by Moses for their cleansing; you accused Him because on the Sabbath day He commanded the impotent man to stretch forth his hand and be healed; you rebuked the blind Bartimeus when he called upon the Son of David to have mercy upon him. You cannot deny that He performed these miracles and signs and wonders in your midst. Known are these things among you from the rulers of the temple, who condemned Him and took Him by wicked hands and crucified and slew Him, to the common people who thronged Him and heard Him gladly. This bold challenge carried with it the conviction of truth, and there was no dissenting voice; but after hearing the eloquent words of the apostle the multitudes cried out: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

As in the days of the apostles, so now we hold up the miracles, signs and wonders performed by the Son of God as evidence of His divine mission to the world, and as proof that God gave Him and His words and work the seal of divine approval. And not only do miracles attest the truth of the teachings of our Lord, but they stand also in the same relation to those He selected to be the immediate teachers and preachers of His Word. Unto the apostles was also given the seal of the divine Father's

approval: "God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His will." [1]

What is a miracle? A clear and concise definition may be found in these words: "An effect in nature not attributable to any of the recognized operations of nature, nor to any act of man, but indicative of superhuman power, and serving as a sign, or witness thereof; a wonderful work, manifesting a power superior to the ordinary forces of nature." Miracles are acts and manifestations of God's power in the universe which He created, superior to the laws and power which govern matter.

God rules the world by established and uniform principles, and these are called the laws of nature. They have to do with the physical and moral world. The laws of nature are held by the common consent of the most enlightened philosophers and scholars to be "THE UNIFORM PLAN ACCORDING TO WHICH, OR THE UNIFORM MANNER IN WHICH, GOD EXERCISES HIS POWER THROUGHOUT THE CREATED UNIVERSE." In thus ruling by uniform laws the greatest good of His creatures is subserved. It sets forth the goodness and wisdom of God, and gives the greatest possible blessing to man. Without such laws we would live in a world of chance happenings and in a state

[1] Heb. 2: 4.

of absolute confusion; but under the beneficent laws of the Creator, summer and winter, seedtime and harvest fail not, and the laws He made to govern the universe are sure in their operations.

A miracle is a deviation from an established law of nature. If in conducting the affairs of the universe God sees fit to deviate from the regular order, who shall say nay? Shall the clay say unto the potter, "What doest thou?" According to the law of nature when a man dies the body decays and returns to dust, but He who made the body and breathed into it the breath of life can, if He will so to do for His own glory and for the good of His creatures, divinely interfere with the law He has made and restore such a one to life again, and thus perform a miracle. The white leprosy of Palestine is absolutely incurable by human agencies. The law governing the disease has never been set aside except by the interposition of God. This He did when He gave the seal of approval to the mission of our Lord and through Him set aside the natural law and performed many miracles. Once believe there is a God and Creator of all things, and the belief in miracles follows as surely as day follows night. And it also as surely follows that Jesus was divinely appointed unto His work, for He was given the godlike power to set aside the laws of nature and work miracles.

God's plan in making Himself known to the children of men through the Holy Scriptures was to reveal Himself to a number of divinely-appointed individuals who wrote as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. What was thus written was then published as a revelation from God for the benefit of the world. Those who wrote were selected because of their fitness and their ability for the work intrusted to their care. But while they were men of marked piety in the age in which they lived, and of great ability, yet they were subject to human limitations, subject to temptations, and were of like passions and the weaknesses common to their fellows and to humanity. While to them the revelation of God came in such a form and in such manner as to leave no doubt in their mind of its divine origin, how was it to be given to the world so that it would be accepted as the revelation of God? Questions of this kind would arise, and the Almighty gave witness to His Word by giving those who declared it the power to work miracles. So in the Old Testament He convinced Moses, the author of the Pentateuch, by setting aside the law governing the action of fire so that the burning bush was not consumed. To His servants of old He gave this witness in large degree, and in the fullness of measure our Lord possessed this divine power, and through Him it was conferred upon His apostles and disciples. In His name

they did many wonderful works, commanding the lame to walk and the dead to rise.

The evidence thus given as a seal to the revelation of God is to be accepted as necessary to convince men that the Book is of God. It is our right, even our duty, to ask for evidence. The revelation, in order to be of use to us, as it is to those who receive it directly from God, must not only be declared by them to us, but must have divine attestation. In other words, those who declare it to us must show, by some incontestable proof, that it is from God. Such proof is found in a miracle. If an event takes place which we know to be contrary to the laws of nature, we at once recognize it as the special act of Him who is the God of nature, and who alone can suspend its laws, and produce effects in another way. The evidence of a direct interposition of God given in this way is irresistible. No man, no infidel, could witness an obvious miracle without being struck with awe and recognizing the finger of God.

It is clear that no event, which can be accounted for on natural principles, can prove a supernatural interposition, or contain a divine attestation to the truth of a prophet's claim. But when we look at an event which cannot be traced to the laws of nature, and is clearly above them, such as the burning wood upon the altar in the case of Elijah's controversy with the false prophets, or the resurrection of Lazarus, we cannot

avoid the conviction that the Lord of heaven and earth does, by such miracle, give His testimony that Elijah is His prophet and that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah. The evidence arising from miracles is so striking and conclusive that there is no way for the infidel to evade it, but to deny the existence of miracles, and to hold that all the events called miraculous may be accounted for according to the laws of nature. [1]

The argument of Hume, the able English historian and the bitter foe of the Christian religion, arrays uniform experience against the credibility of miracles. Campbell, Paley and many others have abundantly shown the shallow sophistry of the argument, which resolves itself into a question as to whether it be more improbable that the miracle be true, or the testimony false, and Paley meets his sophistry in this way: When a theorem is proposed to a mathematician, the first thing he does with it is to try a simple case, and if it produce a false result, he is sure there must be some mistake in the demonstration. Now, to proceed in the same way with what may be called Mr. Hume's theorem. If twelve men, whose probity and good sense I had long known, should seriously and circumstantially relate to me an account of a miracle wrought before their eyes, and in which it was impossible that they should be deceived; if the governor of the country, hearing a rumor of this account, should call these

[1] See Bible Encyclopedia, p. 1168.

men into his presence, and offer them a short proposal, either to confess the imposture, or submit to be tied to a gibbet; if they should refuse with one voice to acknowledge that there existed any falsehood or imposture in the case; if this threat were communicated to them separately, yet with no different effect; if it was at last executed; if I myself saw them, one after another, consenting to be racked, burnt, or strangled, rather than give up the truth of their account;—still, if Mr. Hume's rule be my guide, I am not to believe them. Now I undertake to say that there exists not a skeptic in the world who would not believe them, or who would defend such credulity. [1]

Another writer inquires as to what Hume means by human experience and asks, Does he mean his own experience? But because he has never witnessed a miracle, does it follow that others have not? Does he mean the uniform experience of the greater part of mankind? But how does he know that the experience of a smaller part has not been different from that of the greater part? Does he mean, then, the uniform experience of all mankind in all ages? How, then, does the argument stand? He undertakes to prove that no man has ever witnessed or experienced a miracle, and his real argument is that no one has ever witnessed or experienced it. In other words, to prove that there

[1] See Paley's Evidences.

never has been a miracle, he asserts that there never has been a miracle. This is the nature of his argument—an instance of begging the question, to which a man of Hume's logical mind would never have resorted, had it not been for his enmity to religion.[1]

The genuineness of the miracles admits of not a single doubt. As already intimated, they were performed in the most public manner, in the very presence of the enemies of those who performed them, and before a multitude of witnesses. There was the total absence of the accessories in common use among jugglers and sleight of hand performers. In the presence of many Jews and of the heart-broken sisters of Lazarus, Christ called him forth from the tomb after decay had already taken place. In the presence of a large number of men of unquestionable honesty and intelligence the miracles were performed, and as set forth by Paley they constantly affirmed that they were eyewitnesses to these things. And some of these witnesses wrote and published histories of the facts, in the places where the miracles were performed and near the time when they occurred. In these histories it was openly asserted that the miracles, as described, were publicly known and acknowledged to have taken place; and this statement no one took upon himself to contradict or question. Moreover, many persons who stood forth as witnesses of these miracles

[1] Paley's Evidences, pp. 11, 12.

passed their lives in labors, dangers, and sufferings, in attestation of the accounts they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief in the truth of those accounts; and, from the same motive, they voluntarily submitted to new rules of conduct; while nothing like this is true respecting any other pretended miracles.[1] A large number of these witnesses sealed their faith, in the facts stated by them, with their blood. They endured the greatest sufferings imaginable and counted it all joy when they were beaten and endured suffering in the name of their Master. They were beheaded, crucified, led to the stake and were thrown to wild beasts, all of which they might have escaped by retracting their faith in the teaching of Christ and their belief in the miracles performed by Him. The world does not afford another example of the steadfast faith of these early believers and witnesses in the testimony they bore.

After the truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ had been taught and the doctrines of the Christian religion fully set forth, the miraculous dispensation came to a close. The exact time when the power to work miracles, which belonged pre-eminently to Christ and through Him to His apostles, disciples, and the apostolic church, ceased, cannot be definitely stated. After the church and her divinely-appointed institutions and

[1] The Bible Encyclopedia, p. 1108.

her sacred ordinances had been fully established—and this seems to have been God's purpose in giving to men the power to work miracles—these gradually ceased, and there is no satisfactory evidence that any have occurred since that time.

MIRACLES OF JESUS CHRIST.

MIRACLES	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
Found in One Gospel				
Two Blind Men Restored	9: 27–31			
Dumb Demoniac Healed	9: 32, 33			
Money in Mouth of Fish	17: 24–27			
Deaf and Dumb Man Cured		7: 31–37		
Eyes of Blind Man Opened		8: 22–26		
Jesus Escapes Unseen from His Pursuers			4: 30	
Miraculous Draught of Fishes			5: 1–11	
The Widow's Son Restored to Life			7: 11–17	
Woman with Infirmity Healed			13: 10–17	
Man with Dropsy Cured			14: 1–6	
Ten Lepers Cleansed			17: 11–19	
High Priest's Servant Restored			22: 50, 51	
Water Turned into Wine				2: 1–11
Nobleman's Son healed of Fever				4: 46–54
Healing of Man at Pool of Bethesda				5: 1–16
Eyes of Man Blind from Birth Opened				9: 1–41
Lazarus Raised from the Dead				11: 1–46
Second Draught of Fishes				21: 1–11

MIRACLES	MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
Found in Two Gospels				
The Unclean Spirit Cast Out		1: 23–26	4: 33–37	
Centurion's Servant Healed	8: 5–13		7: 1–10	
Blind and Dumb Demoniac	12: 22		11: 14	
Syrophenician Woman's Daughter Healed	15: 22–28	7: 24–30		
Four Thousand Fed	15: 32–39	8: 1–9		
Cursing of the Fig Tree	21: 18–22	11: 12–14		
Found in Three Gospels				
A Leper Cleansed	8: 1–4	1: 40–45	5: 12–15	
Peter's Wife's Mother Cured	8: 14, 15	1: 30–31	4: 38–39	
The Tempest Stilled	8: 23–27	4: 36–41	8: 22–25	
Herd of Swine Drowned	8: 28–34	5: 1–20	8: 26–40	
Palsied Man Cured	9: 1–8	2: 3–12	5: 18–26	
Woman with Issue of Blood Healed	9: 20–22	5: 25–34	8: 43–48	
Jairus's Daughter Brought to Life	9: 23–35	5: 22–24, 35–43	8: 41, 42, 49–56	
Withered Hand Restored on Sabbath	12: 10–13	3: 1–5	6: 6–10	
Our Lord Walks on the Sea	14: 22–32	6: 47–51		6: 16–21
The Lunatic Child	17: 14–18	9: 17–29	9: 37–42	
Blind Bartimeus (The Two Blind Men.—Matthew)	20: 30–34	10: 46–52	18: 35–43	
Found in All Four Gospels				
Feeding the Five Thousand	14: 15–21	6: 34–44	9: 12–17	6: 5–13

MIRACLES IN THE APOSTOLIC AGE.

MIRACLES	PLACE	RECORD
Outpouring of Holy Ghost on Pentecost	Jerusalem	Acts 2: 1–11
Miracles by the Apostles	Jerusalem	Acts 2: 43; 5: 12, 15
Lame Man Healed	Jerusalem	Acts 3: 7
Death of Ananias and Sapphira	Jerusalem	Acts 5: 1–10
Miracles by Stephen	Jerusalem	Acts: 6: 8
Miracles by Philip	Samaria	Acts 8: 6, 7, 13
Æneas Made Whole	Lydda	Acts 9: 34
Dorcas Restored to Life	Joppa	Acts 9: 40
Peter Delivered from Prison	Jerusalem	Acts 12: 6–10
Elymas Struck Blind	Paphos	Acts 13: 11
Miracles by Paul and Barnabas	Iconium	Acts 14: 3
Lame Man Cured	Lystra	Acts 14: 10
Paul Restored	Lystra	Acts 14: 20
Unclean Spirits Cast Out	Philippi	Acts 16: 18
Paul and Silas Delivered from Prison	Philippi	Acts 16: 25, 26
Special Miracles	Ephesus	Acts 19: 11, 12
Eutychus Restored to Life	Troas	Acts 20: 10–12
Paul Unhurt by a Viper	Melita	Acts 28: 5
Father of Publius and many others Healed	Melita	Acts 28: 8, 9

CHAPTER THIRTEEN.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day . . . For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.—1 Cor. 15: 3, 4, 16-19.

When Jesus Christ died on the cross His followers, even the faithful few, gave up in despair and fled in hopeless dismay. Their expectations, expressed in the hopeful words of Cleopas and his companion as they walked toward Emmaus and were sad, "But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel,"[1] were blasted, their hopes were dead. He in whom they had trusted and for whom they had left all and followed faithfully for the three years of His ministry, He whom they loved, and in whom they had hoped, with a certainty born of strong desire, to see the temporal redemption of Israel an accomplished fact, was dead. The terrible end had come and all was over,

[1] Luke 24: 21.

and with a crushing sense of defeat, and with sad, sorrowful hearts, these poor toilers, disappointed and cast down, were ready to go back again to boats and nets and take up the vocations of life which three short years before they had gladly abandoned to follow the Master. Among them there was no contest now as to who should be greatest in His kingdom, or as to who was to have the place of honor when the Lord sat upon His throne. Their King was dead. He had been taken by wicked men, nailed to the cross like a common criminal and had died among transgressors. Was this the consummation for which they had toiled, and labored, and hoped? No wonder their high hopes fled and in their place came the darkness of despair. It is true that Jesus had told them of His coming death, and that His kingdom was not of this world, but from above, but they did not take these words into conscious acceptance. To them the Messiah was to be a temporal king who was to restore again in all its glory the throne of David. Israel was to be free from the yoke of Roman bondage and to be great among the nations of the earth. And now their King was dead.

The days immediately following the cruel death of Christ on the cross must have been dark and gloomy for His disciples. The future, at one time so bright and promising, so big with the hope of the resto-

ration of Israel to her proud place among the nations of the earth, was now so dark and without a single ray of light. A sense of crushing defeat and overwhelming sorrow oppressed them. The last words on the cross, "It is finished," words fraught with such glorious meaning to the whole human race, sounded the death knell to all their hopes. Even before this, when they realized that their Leader was in the hands of His cruel enemies and that His death was sure to follow, they all deserted Him and fled in dismay. Peter the bold, who, but a few brief hours before, had asserted, with all the fervor of his impulsive nature, that he would never forsake Him and that he was ready to die for Him, fell before the glance of a little maid and with bitter oaths denied His Lord. Even John the beloved forsook Him, to return later and with a few faithful women witness the death agony upon the cross.

Had the death of Jesus been the end of the story of His life, then at the cross would have ended, not only the hopes of His scattered, discouraged disciples, but of the whole world. But the greatest of all His miracles was yet to be performed, the crowning event of the plan of salvation was yet to take place. While redemption was purchased on the cross, and the fountain of salvation was opened in the blood that flowed from hands, and feet, and side, yet the last enemy, death, was to be overcome, victory was

to be wrested from the grave and the sting plucked from death, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ was to become, not only the greatest of all His miracles, not only the central truth of Christianity, but its very foundation in the sense that belief in the fact that He rose from the dead gave renewed life and vitality to the dispersed church. What was it that brought together again the dismayed, heartbroken little group of disciples? What was it that renewed their confidence, faith and trust in the teaching of Jesus, who, only three days before, had been put to death? What was it that gave new life and vitality to the cause for which its Founder had died? It was not the death on the cross, for that had destroyed all their hopes, but it was the bursting of the bars of death, the resurrection from the dead which brought the disheartened few together again.

To their unswerving faith in the resurrection of the Master, to which they clung with a pertinacity that precluded all possibility of doubt on their part,—clung, when it brought upon them the most bitter persecution, the most cruel torture, and even the martyr's death,—must be attributed the renewed life and vitality, in what, but a few days before, was to these same men and women a hopelessly lost cause. No new leader had sprung up amongst them to re-inspire their hope in the dead Christ; yet even before the blood stains were washed from the brow

of Calvary the dispersed disciples were brought together again, animated by a new and glorious hope, and inspired by a full belief and unshaken confidence in the divinity of their risen Lord. They had seen Him, handled Him, had seen His wounded hands and feet and His pierced side, had heard Him speak, had eaten with Him, received from Him words of comfort and consolation, and had finally, with their own eyes, seen Him ascend into heaven. From this time on there was no more doubt, no more denials, no more hesitation, no more fleeing. There was in place of vacillation grand resolve, born of the absolute certainty of faith, to do and to die for the cause of the risen Christ, and nobly and heroically was this resolve carried into execution.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is not only the greatest miracle of the Bible and the central truth of the Christian religion, but it stands as the supreme test of the truth and divine character of Christianity. If He rose not from the dead, then is the Christian religion without hope of the future, and the entire fabric falls to the ground. The truth and importance of this statement were fully recognized by the apostle Paul when he said: "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." And again: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." He also tells us that if there be no resurrection, they which

have fallen asleep in Christ, with the hope of coming forth again from the grave, are perished. Had there been no resurrection, there had been no Christianity. Had Jesus Christ not risen from the dead, there had been no Christian church. Had the tomb been able to hold the crucified Redeemer, then would the world be without hope of eternal life. His coming forth from the grave, as the Holy Scriptures teach, and according to His own words, is a fitting consummation to all His teaching, to all His miracles, and a necessary complement to the plan of salvation, showing without the least shadow of a doubt that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

The importance of the resurrection of Christ is recognized by all unbelievers, and it has been most bitterly attacked by infidels. They well know that if the resurrection of Jesus be admitted as a fact, all controversy as to His divine character and as to His mission to the world is at an end. While they admit that Christ was a great teacher, that His life was pure and holy, that His teaching was far above the average of human thought, that He was crucified by His enemies, because His teachings condemned their sins, they deny His divine nature and say He did not rise from the dead. In view of this denial it becomes our duty to look carefully to the testimony and examine the character of the witnesses and the arguments showing that

Jesus did rise from the dead. Before examining the witnesses the following argument is given because it naturally falls in place at this point:

The existence of the Christian church in the world to-day is positive evidence that Jesus Christ lived, taught, was crucified and rose from the dead.

All existing governments, religions, associations, societies and organizations were founded at some time by some person, or persons, to meet a real or supposed want, and their existence is the most positive proof that they were founded.

The annual celebration of the Fourth of July in this country is the very strongest evidence that the Declaration of Independence was formally announced and published on that day at some previous time. No one living to-day can testify from personal knowledge that the American Colonies did declare themselves free and independent, but the existence of the government and a continuous line of historical facts reaching back to its founding, with the celebration of the Fourth of July, with its superabundance of effervescent patriotism, give proof positive of the establishment of the government, and that on the Fourth of July, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was made. No one with ordinary reason will deny the force of this evidence, and if the United States should exist two

thousand years the proof would lose none of its force.

The existence in the world to-day of a large body of people known as Mohammedans is unmistakable evidence that Mohammed lived and taught and founded his society. Had there been no Mohammed, no Mecca, no Medina, there would be no Mohammedans.

The rite of the Jewish passover, kept alive among orthodox Israelites for more than three thousand years, is proof of the most positive character that the institution of the Jewish passover, as described in the Bible, marks the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. As unerringly as the celebration of the Fourth of July points to the Declaration of Independence, as certainly as the Mohammedans point to Mecca and to Mohammed, so unerringly and surely does the Jewish passover, and the Jews as a people, with the intervening history, point to the deliverance from Egyptian bondage.

With the foregoing illustrations in mind, apply them to Christianity. The church asserts to-day, as it always has asserted since its foundation, that "the sole cause of its renewed life was not that its followers found a new leader, but that they believed that Jesus Christ rose from the dead." This belief, founded on what they witnessed themselves,

became the foundation on which the disciples reconstituted the society. And the Christian church to-day, with its intervening history carrying us back to the very days of the life and death of its Founder, gives the most positive proof of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To doubt this is to doubt all history and doubt one's own senses and reason.

Now to the testimony and the character of the witnesses. The four evangelists all give minute and detailed accounts of the particulars connected with the great event. It is true that in a few unimportant, minor details they differ; but this, instead of weakening their testimony, adds strength to it. It shows most conclusively that there was no collusion among the witnesses. If the four had met, planned their testimony, determining what each should write, there would doubtless have been closer agreement as to what was written, but the fact stands out prominently that each wrote without the knowledge of the others, and wrote simply and naturally, as one narrates and writes who has the truth to tell. Each one wrote what he had seen or heard, from his own point of view. Here we have no made-up story, no plan to palm off on the people a fraud, but the plain, simple statement of pious, godly men. Our four witnesses were men of simple, godly lives. They had known Christ

intimately from the beginning of his ministry, and were either apostles or were the close companions and associates of the Twelve. They had the very best possible opportunities of seeing and knowing the things whereof they testified. They bore witness to the resurrection of Christ from the fullness of personal knowledge.

Those who deny the resurrection of Christ find themselves confronted with the task of meeting the testimony of these witnesses and of setting aside the following difficulties. They ask us to believe that the four evangelists, with the apostle Paul, and more than five hundred witnesses bore false testimony. We are asked to believe that the apostles invented the whole system of doctrines, based upon the resurrection of Christ, and that they went about the world proclaiming this as essential to the salvation of men, appealing to God, in the most solemn manner, to sanction the falsehood, and willing to endure persecution, and to lay down life itself, in attestation of a lie. We are further to believe that they taught this fabulous story so connectedly and harmoniously that their followers never detected any disagreement, or suspected them of having invented it. Though Peter and Paul and James are recorded to have differed on ceremonial questions, and to have had sharp disputes, yet we are to believe that they

never suffered a hint to escape them, in one unguarded moment, that their story of the resurrection was a myth; nay, that they kept the secret so well during their whole lives that a great multitude of believers, in all parts of the world, received it as the corner stone of their religion, many of whom suffered and died for it, and not one of whom we know ever doubted it; and the unknown millions of believers who have followed have all shared this delusion, lived in the belief that the risen Savior was at God's right hand, and had given them in His resurrection a pledge that they would likewise rise from their graves.[1] How much more logical and reasonable is it to believe our witnesses than to accept this impossible hypothesis.

It may seem like a repetition again to call attention to the fact that not only the four evangelists, who record the details concerning the resurrection of our Lord, but all the apostles and disciples believed, with an unwavering faith that knew no doubting, that their beloved Master rose from the dead. Men and women do not voluntarily suffer as these suffered for mere opinion's sake. Men and women do not forsake father and mother, home and country, houses and land and all they possess in this world and endure privation and want, persecution and imprisonment, torture and death for a

[1] "Credibility of the Christian Religion," pp. 72, 73.

falsehood. No stronger evidence of their positive belief, that Jesus Christ was the Son of God and that He rose from the dead, could be given than was given by hundreds and thousands of primitive Christians who sealed their faith with their blood.

The next witness to be examined is a most important one, and if there were no other testimony extant as to the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we might take four of the letters written by our witness and prove without the shadow of a doubt that within thirty years after the event occurred it was accepted as the central truth of the Christian religion and that it was universally accepted by all the churches. The letters referred to are Paul's epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians. Prebendary Row of London in his "Historical Evidences of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ" bases his entire argument, a synopsis of which is here given, on these four letters and makes out the strongest possible case.

It has often been objected by unbelievers that we have no contemporaneous historical evidence of the resurrection as claimed by the four evangelists. But this is a mistake. We are in possession of letters written by one who was both a contemporary and also the most active agent in founding the Christian church. Now contemporary letters of this kind are admitted by all modern historians

to be the most valuable of all historical documents. They are continually hunting them up in every direction as the best means of throwing a clear light on the history of the past. They are far more valuable as a means of discriminating truth from falsehood than formal histories, even when composed by historians who lived at the time the events occurred. Such are frequently written under strong bias, but the incidental allusions in letters frequently put us in possession of facts and motives which have been carefully concealed from the world. This is especially the case in confidential letters between friends.

It is therefore impossible to overestimate the importance of the concession made to us by the learned critical unbelievers of modern times, that beyond all question of doubt we are in possession of documents of this description, carrying us back to the earliest days of Christianity. The latest date which can be assigned to them is *twenty-eight years after the crucifixion.* These letters put us in direct communication with the thoughts of the most active missionary of the infant church, and of those to whom the letters were addressed. Their character is such that they present us with an entire picture of the man who wrote them—what he did, what he thought, what he believed—with a freshness and vigor scarcely to be found in any other

letters in existence. By their means we can hold direct communication with their author, and almost put him into the witness box. They depict him as he lived, thought, moved; and they render it indisputable that he was a man of the most unimpeachable veracity. It is of no little consequence, then, that these letters are admitted by all to be genuine.

The attention of the reader is now called to the fact that these four letters of St. Paul were written within that interval of time after the date of the crucifixion that comes within the period of the most perfect historical recollection. Not only were they written *within twenty-eight years of the crucifixion by one whose activity as a missionary of Christianity had extended over the preceding twenty years, but he was then of such an age that his historical recollections were good for at least fifteen years earlier.* Although he had not seen Jesus Christ before His crucifixion, he must have conversed with multitudes who had done so and had heard Him teach. In these letters, therefore, we are in possession of a contemporaneous record of the highest order and of the greatest value.

Let us test, by our own practical experience, the value of historical recollections that are only twenty-eight years old. This period of time is twelve years less than the interval which separates the

present year, 1902, from the stirring events of the civil war in the United States. Our recollections of those events are so fresh and lively that it is simply impossible that we could become a prey to a number of legendary stories respecting them. Such stories can only grow up after considerable intervals of time, when the recollection of events has lost its freshness, and the generation which has witnessed them has died out. Let it then be impressed upon the reader that Paul, when he wrote his epistles, was separated from the crucifixion by an interval of time not so great as that which separates us from the civil war.

The time of St. Paul's conversion is fixed by all parties as occurring between the dates A. D. 34 and 40. He therefore had the amplest means of knowing what was the belief of the Christians at this early period, and must not only have had the most positive certainty respecting what it was on which the renewed prosperity of the church rested, but he could not have failed to know that his primitive followers also ascribed a number of superhuman actions to our Lord. Nor was this all. For some time previous to his conversion he acted the part of a fierce persecutor of the church. This fact we learn from his own pen. In acting this part, common sense would have suggested to him the necessity of minutely scrutinizing the tenets of the new society,

and, above all, of investigating with the utmost care the foundation on which it rested: namely, the alleged resurrection of its Founder. He must therefore have been fully cognizant of the beliefs of the church in connection with this event, and as a vehement opponent he must have done his utmost to expose any delusion respecting it.

The epistles make it certain that Paul did not only believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ as an historical fact, but that he considered it as the foundation on which the life of the revived Christian community was based. To the resurrection he refers many times, so many times that not all can be quoted. In the text at the head of this chapter he expressly asserts that if the resurrection of Jesus Christ is not a fact, Christianity is a delusion.

His mode of reference to this event proves that he not only believed in it as a fact, but that he did not entertain the smallest doubt that those to whom he wrote believed it as firmly as himself. He refers to it in the most direct terms and in the most incidental manner as the foundation of the common faith both of himself and of those to whom he wrote. He evidently calculated that they would receive his statements respecting it without the smallest hesitation. Now nothing is more valuable than incidental references such as these to an event.

They prove that the writer, and those to whom he writes, know all about it, and have a common belief respecting it. Notice how this is exemplified in the ordinary letters which we write. When we know that our correspondent is fully acquainted with an occurrence we simply allude to it, without entering into a formal description of it; and we feel sure that our view of the fact is accepted by him. Such is the manner in which Paul refers to the resurrection of Jesus Christ throughout these letters, with the exception of First Corinthians 15 and Galatians 1 and 2, where his reference is for purposes directly historical and controversial.

It should be observed that differences of opinion obtained among the members of the Corinthian church, and that these differences resulted in partyism. There was a party for Paul, one for Peter and another for Apollos. Paul refers to this spirit of division among them and rebukes it; but while this is true it is also clear that the apostle and those who differed from him agreed as to the truth of the resurrection. About this there was no difference of opinion.

The evidence furnished in the epistle to the Galatians is also most conclusive in its character. In this church there were those who had departed from the teaching of Paul so far that he calls their doctrines by the name of "*a different gospel.*" This

party had drawn some away from the truth. No one can read this letter without seeing that the state of things in this church had touched him to the quick. It is full of deep bursts of feeling; yet the whole epistle is written with the most absolute confidence that, however great were the differences between his opponents and himself, there was no diversity of opinion between them that the belief in the resurrection of Jesus was the foundation stone of their common Christianity. Hear his words at the beginning of the letter: "Paul, an apostle not from men, neither through men, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead, and all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia. I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from Him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel, which is not another gospel; only there are some who trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." [1]

If Paul's belief and that of his opposers in Galatia had not been in complete accord on the doctrine of the resurrection, no man in his senses would have thrown down such a challenge as that which is contained in these words, and also in terms equally as strong throughout the entire epistle.

But the evidence which is furnished in the epistle

[1] Revised Version.

to the Galatians also brings in the testimony of the churches at Jerusalem and at Antioch, the one the center of Jewish, the other of Gentile Christianity. Paul's opponents at Galatia were Judaizing Christians, who professed to be the followers of Peter and James. In the second chapter of the letter Paul asserts that his teaching was in substantial harmony with that of these two great chiefs of the Jewish church. It follows, therefore, as their professed adherents concurred with him in believing that the resurrection was a fact, that these two apostles must have been persuaded that they themselves had seen their risen Lord, and that the whole Jewish church must have concurred with them in this belief. This same chapter also makes it certain that the entire church at Antioch did the same at the period when Peter and Paul jointly visited it, and involves also the fact of Peter's direct testimony to the truth of the resurrection. This proves beyond all doubt that the belief in the resurrection was coincident with the renewed life of the Christian church immediately after the crucifixion.

The evidence afforded by the epistle to the Romans is no less important than that which has already been noticed. If it be urged that Paul founded the churches at Corinth and Galatia, and that even his opponents would have accepted his

views on this point, the church at Rome was one he had neither founded nor visited at the time he wrote. It had been in existence several years before he wrote his letter to them; and it was a church so large and important that he felt that he was in no danger of being misapprehended when he said that "*their faith was a subject of conversation throughout the whole world.*" It contained a large Jewish element; and from the number of strangers who visited the imperial city there can be no doubt that among its members must have been representatives of every variety of Christian thought. Yet he addressed the church with the fullest confidence that its members held the same views as himself respecting the resurrection. This is set forth in the opening words of the epistle: "And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead;"[1] and the same truth permeates the entire contents of the epistle.

In the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians Paul makes a definite statement as to the number of those who had seen the risen Savior. At one time more than five hundred had seen Him, and of these more than half were alive when he wrote the letter. Now, consider how, in making this assertion, he must have put himself in the hands of his opponents

[1] Rom. 1: 4.

if this fact was not generally admitted to be true. They might have put an end to his reasoning then and there by simply exposing the falsity of such a statement. The attempt of unbelievers to escape the force of this fact by saying that the apostle was careless of inquiry into the truth of such stories is here quite beyond the mark, for they forget that it was made in the presence of those who would have been only too eager to expose a misstatement if they had been able. But if these five hundred persons really believed they had seen Jesus Christ alive after the crucifixion, how is it possible to account for so singular a fact otherwise than on the assumption of its truth?

The points here proven may be summed up as follows:

1. That within less than twenty-eight years after the crucifixion the entire Christian church, without distinction of party, believed that the one sole ground of its existence was the fact that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead.

2. That at that period there were more than two hundred and fifty persons living who believed that they had seen Him alive after His crucifixion.

3. That the belief in the resurrection was held in common by Paul and his most violent opponents.

4. That it is an unquestionable fact that the entire Christian church believed in the resurrection

of its Founder, as an essential ground of its existence, within six or seven years after the date of His crucifixion.

5. That at least three of the apostles asserted that they had seen Jesus Christ alive after His death.

6. That within a few months after His crucifixion the church must have been reconstructed on the foundation of the belief that its crucified Messiah had been raised from the dead. I say a few months, because if the interval had been longer while the belief was growing, the church must have perished in its Founder's grave.[1]

The witnesses have been examined and the testimony is sure. There can be but one verdict from the unprejudiced mind, and that verdict must be that Jesus Christ the Son of God rose from the dead. Before closing this chapter with words placed in the mouth of one of our witnesses when he stood before the Romans ready to be offered, attention is called to an argument used by the author of "Credibility of the Christian Religion." He refers to the fact that the gospel narratives all record the resurrection in a way that reflects discredit on the apostles themselves. They are represented as having received from Christ Himself in His lifetime several intimations of His approaching death and resurrection, and yet when He was

[1] "Historical Evidences of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ."

betrayed they all forsook Him and fled; and Peter, His boldest follower, denied Him thrice with oaths: and so entirely did they lose confidence in Him that when He rose from the grave they were utterly incredulous, and refused to believe till Christ had shown Himself to them several times in the most unmistakable manner. How came it that the apostles allowed such a discreditable version to get afloat if the whole affair was a concoction of their own? Was ever such absurdity known as a body of men inventing a stupendous fiction, and then narrating it so as to mortify their self-esteem in the most poignant manner? Had they narrated the resurrection in such a way as to set forth their own glory, or secure some earthly advantage for themselves, it might have been maintained with some show of reason that they had conspired to delude the world; but that they should have invented a falsehood and told it in such a way as to bring humiliation upon themselves, and submitted to be treated as the offscourings of the earth all the rest of their lives, simply to hoax mankind, is a theory so preposterous that we marvel any man should hold it who has not parted company with his reason or his conscience.

When Paul the aged stood before the Romans ready to be offered for his faith in the Lord Jesus

Christ and in His resurrection from the dead, these words might have been his:

"Do I stand here demanding to be believed for opinions? No, but for facts. I have seen the sick made whole, the lame walk, the blind receive their sight, by the mere name of Him whom you crucified. I have seen men, once ignorant of all languages but their own, speaking with the language of every nation under heaven: the still greater wonder of the timid defying all fear, the unlearned instantly made wise in the mysteries of all things divine and human, the peasant putting to shame the learned, awing the proud, enlightening the darkened: alike in the courts of kings, before the furious people, and in the dungeon, armed with an irrepressible spirit of knowledge, reason, and truth that confounded their adversaries. I have seen the still greater wonder of the renewed heart: the impure suddenly abjuring vice; the covetous, the cruel, the faithless, the godless, gloriously changed into the holy, the gentle, the faithful, worshipers of the true God in spirit and in truth—the conquest of the passions which defied your philosophers, your tribunals, your rewards, and your terrors, achieved in the one mighty name. Those are facts, things which I have seen with these eyes; and who that had seen them could doubt that the finger of God was there? Dared I refuse my be-

lief to the divine mission of the Being by whom, and even in memory of whom, things baffling the proudest human means were wrought before my senses? Irresistibly compelled by facts to believe that Christ was sent by God, I was with equal force compelled to believe in the doctrines declared by that glorious revealer of the King alike of quick and dead. And thus I stand before you this day, at the close of a long life of labor and love, a Christian.

"Men may be insane for opinions, but who can be insane for facts? The coming of Christ was prophesied a thousand years before! From the beginning of His ministry, He lived wholly before the eyes of mankind. His life corresponds with the prophecies in circumstances totally beyond human conjecture, contrivance, or power. The Virgin Mother, the village in which He was born, the lowliness of His cradle, the worship paid to Him there, the hazard of His life—all were predicted. Could the infant have shaped the accomplishment of those predictions? The death that He should die, the hands by which it was to be inflicted, even the draught that He should drink, the raiment that He should be clothed in, and the sepulcher in which He should be laid, were predicted. Could the man have shaped their accomplishment? The time of His resting in the tomb, His resurrection, His

ascent to heaven, the sending of the Holy Spirit after He was gone—all were predicted; all were beyond human collusion, human power, even beyond human thought! All were accomplished! Is not here the finger of God?

"Those things, too, were universally known to the nation most competent to detect collusion. Did Christ come to Rome, where every new religion finds adherents, and where all pretensions might be advanced without fear; where a deceiver might have quoted prophecies that never existed, and vaunted of wonders done where there was no eye to detect them? No! His life was spent in Judea. He made His appeal to the Scriptures in a country where they were in the hands of a nation opposed to Him. His miracles were wrought before the eyes of a priesthood that watched Him step by step, His doctrines were spoken, not to the mingled multitude holding a thousand varieties of opinion, and careless of all, but to an exclusive race, subtle in their inquiries, eager in their zeal, and proud of their peculiar possession of divine knowledge.

"Yet against His life, His miracles, or His doctrine, what charge could they bring? None. There is not a single stigma on the purity of His conduct; the power of His wonder-working control over men and nature; the holiness, wisdom, and

grandeur of His views of Providence; the truth, charity, and meekness of His counsels to man. Their single source of hatred was the pride of worldly hearts that expected a king where they were to have found a teacher.

"Their single charge against Him was His prophecy that there should be an end to their temple and their state within the life of man.

"They crucified Him; He died in prayer, that His murderers might be forgiven; and His prayer was mightily answered. He had scarcely risen to His eternal throne when thousands believed and were forgiven. To Him be glory, forever and ever!

"Compare Him with your legislators. He gives the spirit of all law in a single sentence: 'Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you.' Compare Him with your priesthood. He gives a single prayer, containing the substance of all that man can rationally implore of heaven. Compare Him with your moralists. He lays the foundation of virtue in love to God! Compare Him with your sages. He leads a life of privation without a murmur: He dies a death of shame, desertion, and agony, and His last breath is mercy! Compare Him with your conquerors. Without the shedding of a drop of blood He has already conquered hosts that would have resisted all the swords of earth! hosts of stubborn passions, cherished vices,

guilty perversions of the powers and faculties of man. In proof of all, look on these glorious dead, whom I shall join before the set of yonder sun. Yes, martyrs of God! ye were His conquest, and ye too are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us and gave Himself for us. But a triumph shall come, magnificent and terrible, when all eyes shall behold Him, and the tribes of earth, even they who pierced Him, shall mourn.

"Then rejoice, ye dead! for ye shall rise; ye shall be clothed with glory: ye shall be as angels, bright and powerful, immortal, intellectual kings! 'for though the worm destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.'"

CHAPTER FOURTEEN.

The Epiphanies of Our Risen Lord.

I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.—Rev. 1: 18.

As has already been stated, the great central fact of the Christian religion is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It is the very foundation upon which Christianity rests. This being true, the appearances of our Lord to His followers after He had triumphed over death and the grave are among the most important and interesting incidents of His sojourn amongst them. The dawning of that momentous first day of the week, which held in its limits the hopes of the world, was heralded by an earthquake which rent the rocks about the city of Jerusalem and struck dread to the hearts of the Roman soldiers who watched at the tomb in the garden within a stone's throw of the walls of the city. To complete their undoing, the angel of the Lord came down from heaven, with countenance like lightning, and with raiment white as snow. He came among the stricken soldiers to the tomb where Christ lay, closed with a great stone and sealed with the signet of the mighty

Cæsar, ruler of the kingdoms of the earth; but a mightier than Cæsar was there, one to whom the seals of this great earthly potentate were but as the clay upon which they were stamped. The seal was broken, the stone was rolled away and the Shining One sat upon it lighting up the empty tomb of the Son of God with effulgent glory. Henceforth it was no more to be the gloomy portal to an unknown world, but the open way to the home of the redeemed of the Lord. The question asked by Job so many centuries before, "If a man die, shall he live again?" was answered in the affirmative, for Jesus Christ had risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept.

The glad resurrection day was to take the place of the Jewish Sabbath in the Christian church, for it gave us a living, communing Savior, a Savior who had been tempted in all points as we are tempted, and who is now our living advocate with the Father. The cross gave us a dead Christ, the resurrection a living Redeemer. Ours is not a religion of the dead, but of the living; not of the tomb, but of the coronation. Blessed day which celebrates the resurrection of the Son of God. It brings us a new Sabbath of God, a certified Gospel of peace, and a salvation from sin, death, and the grave.

"'Christ, the Lord, is risen to-day,'
Sons of men and angels say:
Raise your joys and triumphs high:
Sing, ye heavens, and, earth, reply!

"Love's redeeming work is done,
Fought the fight, the battle won;
Lo! our Sun's eclipse is o'er;
Lo! He sets in blood no more.

"Vain the stone, the watch, the seal;
Christ hath burst the gates of hell:
Death in vain forbids His rise:
Christ hath opened Paradise.

"Hail the Lord of Earth and Heaven!
Praise to Thee by both be given!
Thee we greet triumphant now!
Hail! the resurrection, Thou!"

The recorded appearances of Jesus after the resurrection are given as nearly as possible in the order of their occurrence. There is some question as to the exact time when they took place, but none as to the fact that He did appear to His disciples as set forth in the Holy Scriptures. Neither are we to suppose that all the epiphanies of Christ are recorded in the New Testament. We are told that He showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs to His apostles, "being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."

The First Epiphany.

His Appearance to Mary Magdalene at the Sepulcher.

Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils.—Mark 16: 9.

Mary had come to the garden with broken heart to visit and mourn at the tomb of her greatest Friend and Benefactor. She loved much because much had been forgiven her. She found an empty sepulcher, and as she stood weeping in her anguish, believing that the enemies of Christ, not satisfied with having murdered Him, had stolen His body and borne it away, these words came to her ear, "Why weepest thou?" In the dim twilight of the early morning hour she did not recognize the speaker, and answered: "Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." Then she heard a single word uttered with all the tenderness of divine love, by a voice so well known to her, that thrilled and touched her heart as no other voice in all the world could touch and thrill her. The Master called her and said, "Mary." In glad surprise she turned and beheld her Lord. It was enough. No doubt clouded the brightness of her faith. No need for her to see nail prints or spear thrusts, in the ecstasy of her soul at hearing and seeing Him alive she

cried out, "My Master!" Words fail to paint the scene of our Lord's first appearance to Mary. To realize, even in the smallest degree, the feelings of the weeping woman one must have had like experiences. Only those who have suffered know what suffering means, only those who have had a great joy know the meaning of the word, and only those who have loved as Mary loved can know how her soul moved when she again saw her Master. Arnold in his matchless poem, "The Light of the World," puts these words in the mouth of Mary:

"Oh, a dear word
Spoke first to me, and, after me, to all,
That all may always know He is the Lord,
And Death is dead, and new times come to men;
And Heaven's ways justified, and Christ alive,
Whom we saw die, nailed on the cruel Cross!
For, while I lay there, sobbing at His feet
The word He spake—My Lord! my King! my Christ!
Was my name:
'Mary.'

"If I say the Dead
Catch tone of some melting tenderness
When first their lovers in the new Life flock
And greet and kiss them, telling them sweet things
Of bliss beyond, and Love crowned Conqueror;
If I should speak of children, dreaming ill,
And then grown 'ware it is the dear safe breast
Of their fond Mother which they fret upon!
If I should liken hopeless mariners
Snatched sudden from black gulfs; or men condemned,
Ransomed from chains, and led to marriage-feasts;—

With the swift comfort of that instant change,
All must fall short! only I turned
My quick glance upward; saw Him; knew Him! sprang
Crying: 'Rabboni!—Lord! my Lord! dear Lord!'

"When I was fain
To fling my arms around His knees, and pour
My hair upon His feet, and eat, eat, eat
His garment's hem, with kissing; measuredly
He stayed me, saying: 'Touch Me not! not yet
Am I ascended to My Father! Go!
Speak to My brethren; say that I ascend
Unto My Father, and to yours,—My God,
And your God.'"

The Second Epiphany.

His Appearance to the Other Women.

Go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulcher with fear and great joy; and did run to bring His disciples word. And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him.—Matt. 28: 7-9.

Again our Lord shows Himself to His disciples, and in each case to the women first. It was fitting that He should reveal Himself first of all to His most faithful followers. It is said of them that they were last at the cross and first at the sepulcher, first to see their risen Lord. In their great perplexity at finding an empty tomb where they had laid the Lord, the women turn about and are accosted by angels from heaven who bring to them

the surprising news that Jesus the Crucified is not among the dead, but among the living. He is risen from the dead, and here you may see where He was laid in the tomb. Go and tell His disciples and Peter that He is risen from the dead and that He will go before them into Galilee. And behold, as they hurry away from the tomb with great joy in their hearts, believing without seeing, bearing the great news to the disciples that the Lord is risen, Jesus meets them and gives them heaven's gracious salutation, "All hail." And they fall down, clinging to His feet, and worship Him.

The Third Epiphany.

His Appearance to Simon Peter.

But go your way, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee. . . The Lord is risen and hath appeared unto Simon. . . , And that He was seen of Cephas, and then of the twelve.—Mark 16: 7; Luke 24: 34; 1 Cor. 15: 5.

After Peter denied the Lord and came to realize fully the enormity of his sin, he went out all heart-broken and wept bitterly. His was a godly sorrow that worketh true repentance. Whether the poor, broken-hearted disciple saw his Master again before the crucifixion we are not informed. After his bitter weeping he may have been among those who saw the end on Calvary. Whether he did or not, no sooner had the Savior risen from the dead than He sent a message to His disciples, naming

Peter especially. Why this special naming of the denier of Christ? Why not a special message to John the beloved? What was the silent meaning of the message to the heartbroken man who had wept so bitterly over his fatal weakness? May it not have been because of the desire of the Lord to comfort the heart of Peter and to convey to him the assurance of His forgiveness? It would be intensely interesting to know what took place in this first interview between the disciple and his risen Lord. There is no doubt but that they met alone. Was it not then that the Lord gave the erring one the full assurance of His forgiveness, and took him back to His heart and confidence? It must have been a most touching scene. How Peter's heart, in all the impulsiveness of his nature, must have gone out to the Master. How he must have humbled himself because of his weakness. It may be that the interview is purposely kept from us. What we do know is that from this time on there was no more hesitation or denials on the part of Peter. He was now the brave, bold defender of the Gospel, the eloquent expounder of the faith once delivered unto the saints. He suffered persecution, and when he was crucified, as was his Lord, he requested that he might be placed on the cross head downward as not being worthy, even on the tree, to occupy the position of his risen Lord on the cross.

The Fourth Epiphany.

His Appearance to the Two Disciples.

And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. And their eyes were holden that they should not know Him. . . And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us, while He talked with us, by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?—Luke 24: 15, 16, 32.

This is now the fourth time that Jesus showed Himself to the disciples on resurrection day. Cleopas and his comrade, unknown to us by name, were wending their way from Jerusalem to Emmaus, some eight miles away. Their hearts were sad because of the occurrence of events so momentous in their character as to change the history of the world. As they spoke together of the Master and of His death and burial He joined them and opened unto them the Scriptures in such a way as to cause their hearts to burn within them. But their eyes were holden so that they knew Him not until they reached their village home and constrained Him to abide with them. Then as they sat at meat He took bread and blessed and brake and gave them to eat as He had often done before And now their eyes were opened and they knew Him. But with this knowledge coming to them the Lord disappeared. Hastening back to the city they bore the glad tidings that the Lord was risen

from the dead, and told how He was known to them by the breaking of bread. Their testimony was added to that of the women and Simon Peter, and while the apostles stood wondering at all that had been told them, some doubting whether these things could be so, Jesus stood in their midst.

The Fifth Epiphany.

His Appearance to the Ten without Thomas.

And as they spake, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said unto them, Peace be upon you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit. And He said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have. And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet, and while they believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, Have ye any meat?—Luke 24: 36-41.

Receiving the testimony of the brethren from Emmaus and having already received that of the women and of Peter, one would conclude that the apostles would all be convinced. But still they doubted. They were slow to believe that their Lord, who had been crucified and laid in the tomb, had come forth and was alive. But even while they spoke of their doubts the risen Lord stood in their midst and gave them the salutation of peace. They had securely closed and fastened the doors for fear of the Jews. They feared the enemies who

had crucified Jesus, the spies of the Sanhedrin might come suddenly upon them, and so now as they listened to and discussed the strange tidings of the resurrection they did so with barred doors. But the closed doors, doubly barred though they might have been, could not exclude the Savior. And when He appeared among them, the most of them not believing in His resurrection, they stood affrighted, thinking that a spirit had appeared unto them. How very natural all this is. Its very naturalness carries the impress of truth with it. Here is no made-up story, but the record of an actual occurrence. The Lord chides them, Mark says "upbraiding them," because of their unbelief, because they believed not the testimony of those who had seen Him alive and borne witness to them that they had seen Jesus. But good has come out of their unwillingness to believe until fully convinced. Doubtless because of this tendency we have such abundant testimony of His resurrection and so many recorded epiphanies.

The Sixth Epiphany.

His Appearance to the Eleven, Thomas Being Present.

Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe. Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but

believing. And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.—John 20: 25, 27-29.

The five appearances of Jesus Christ on the day He rose from the dead resulted in convincing all the apostles of His resurrection except Thomas who for some cause was absent from that meeting. Because of his absence, and of his expressed determination not to believe without the very strongest testimony, he has received the name of Thomas the doubter. What he missed by being absent from that Sunday evening meeting was an incalculable loss to him. When Jesus breathed upon those who were present and said unto them, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit," Thomas, because of his absence, lost his part in the divine benediction. He missed all that Jesus said to His disciples at the close of the resurrection day. It would be well for us to take a lesson from the experience of Thomas and never miss an opportunity of being present at meeting where the Lord blesses His people. And now a week has passed and Jesus is again with His disciples, and the doubting Thomas is present. How the Lord calls him to task for his unbelief, and how He gives him the proof that he was determined to have: "Here are the nail prints, Thomas; here is the spear thrust in My side; press in your finger and thrust in your hand and

be not faithless, but believing." But his finger did not press the wounded hands and feet, neither did his hand seek the pierced side; when he saw he exclaimed in the fullness of faith, "My Lord and my God." Because he believed when he saw, he received a blessing, but was told that a far greater blessing had come and would come to those who had not seen and yet believed.

The Seventh Epiphany.

His Appearance to the Seven at the Sea of Galilee.

After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise showed He Himself.—John 21: 1.

Simon Peter had said to his companions, "I go a fishing," and the reply was, "We also go with thee." They toiled through the long hours of the weary night and caught nothing. In the early morning a man, unknown to them, stood on the shore and asked them if they had anything to eat, and they answered him, "No." "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find," said the stranger on the shore. And doing this they took a great multitude of fishes and were unable to draw the net. The quick eye of John discerned the Lord, and he said to Simon, "It is the Lord." This was enough for the impulsive fisherman who to hide his nakedness girt his fisher cloak about

him and sprang into the sea and swam and waded to the shore where Jesus was. Then came the touching interview in which three times the Lord asked Peter if he loved Him, commanding him at each affirmative answer to feed His lambs and sheep. After this He told Peter that when he was young he girded himself and went where he would, but that when he became old another would gird him and take him where he would not go. The language was prophetical and when the apostle had labored earnestly and faithfully for his Lord and Master for many years and had suffered imprisonment and stripes for the cause he loved, he was bound to the cross and sealed his faith with his blood.

The Eighth Epiphany.

His Appearance to the Eleven on a Mountain in Galilee.

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. . . And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.—Matt. 28: 16, 18-20.

On the very day of the resurrection Jesus in His message to His disciples, sent by the women, told them to go into Galilee where He would meet them.

This eighth recorded meeting with His followers after His resurrection was duly appointed by the Lord, and there is some reason to believe that it was on this same occasion, on the slopes of the unnamed mountain of Galilee, that the risen Redeemer was seen by above five hundred disciples at one time. Whether this was the time to which Paul refers in Corinthians or not, we do not know; we do know, however, that the eleven were with Him and that it was at this time that He gave to His apostles and through them to the world the great commission to preach, teach and baptize. It was His last commandment, given after He had received all power in heaven and in earth. And it comes down to us with the same force and authority that it had for the apostles. And then came the blessed promise, based upon obedience to His blessed Gospel, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Every human being who obeys the risen Lamb of God, and "like Him goes about to do good, converting sinners from the error of their ways, building up the body of Christ, fulfilling his own vocation as an apostle or missionary sent from God; every Christian, however weak or obscure or young, belongs to the true apostolic succession."

"Both theirs and ours Thou art,
As we and they are Thine:
Kings, Prophets, Patriarchs, all have part
Along the sacred line."

The Ninth Epiphany.

His Appearance to More than Five Hundred at One Time.

After that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.—1 Cor. 15: 6.

Whether this record refers to a time differing from the preceding epiphany we know not, but here it stands as a fact recorded by the apostle Paul, whose epistles are not questioned by the boldest infidel, that after the resurrection our Savior was seen by more than five hundred of His followers at one time. Many of these were still alive when Paul wrote, but some had departed. The apostle, recognizing the importance of this great cloud of witnesses in the chain of testimony proving the resurrection of our Lord beyond all cavil or doubt, gives it to us that we may not be without abundant evidence that Jesus rose from the dead.

The Tenth Epiphany.

His Appearance to James.

After that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles.—1 Cor. 15: 7.

As this appearance of our Lord, after His resurrection, cannot be identified with any of those recorded in the Gospel, it must be accepted as one among the many unrecorded appearances which

occurred during the forty days He was with His disciples before His ascension. In the first chapter of Acts we read, "To whom also He shewed Himself alive after His passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." The James here referred to is undoubtedly the brother of Jesus. In Galatians two, and nine, he is spoken of as one of the pillars of the church and in the great church council at Jerusalem he was the chief spokesman, and his opinions had great weight with the conference. Like the special appearance to Peter, no record has been made of what occurred when Christ appeared to his brother in the flesh. It was the turning point in the life of James and his brethren. From this time on they were consistent followers of the Savior.

Neander, referring to the testimony given by Paul regarding the resurrection of Christ, says that he was led by the Holy Ghost to give the appearances after the resurrection so that if any should be inclined to doubt the testimonies given by the evangelists on this point, and to assume in these a mythic element, he is here entirely debarred from doing so, since nobody ever has doubted, or will doubt the genuineness of this epistle, and Paul is here speaking of historical facts throughout. Accordingly, we may say that the resurrection of

Christ is a fact as well attested as any in the past. Without it there would be a gap in history unfilled; since the resurrection is essentially presupposed in the very existence of the church as built by the apostle.

The Eleventh Epiphany.

His Appearance at the Ascension.

And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up: and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.—Acts 1: 9-11.

And now came the last of the Savior's appearances to His followers before His ascension. For forty days He had been seen of them, going in and out among them, eating with them, teaching them, and communing with them and showing Himself to them by many infallible proofs. They had come together again to be with Him and to hear from Him such words as He might have for them. It was to be the final interview between Master and disciples. He told them to remain at Jerusalem until the Holy Ghost, the promise of the Father, was come upon them. He also answered their question as to the present restoration of Israel, telling them that God's seasons did not come with-

in the limit of human knowledge. And then, after telling them that they should be His witnesses unto the uttermost parts of the earth, the everlasting gates were uplifted and the King of glory was received up into heaven.

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
Yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors:
That the King of glory may come in!
Who, then, is the King of glory?
The Lord of Hosts,
He is the King of glory."

The Twelfth Epiphany.

Our Lord's Appearance to the Apostle Paul.

And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.—1 Cor. 15: 8.

Some five years had passed away after Jesus had taken farewell of His disciples and had been taken up from them to the right hand of the Father in the glory world. A company of travelers were nearing the old city of Damascus. Their leader was a young man of rare ability, of matchless energy and of unconquerable zeal. He had won for himself an unenviable reputation by his persistent persecution of the church of God. He had assisted at the stoning of the first martyr of the religion of the risen Christ. He was now on his way to Damascus armed with high authority to carry persecution to the Christians in that city. But he

was never to reach that place as a persecutor; he did go as a humble penitent seeking to know the truth as it is in Jesus. What had wrought this wonderful change? Jesus the crucified and risen Lord had appeared unto the earnest, zealous young Jew in the way, and the whole course of his life was changed. The conversion of Saul of Tarsus is one of the great miracles of the New Testament, and his testimony leaves no doubt as to how he was stricken down by the marvelous light attending this last epiphany of Jesus Christ. Paul saw the Savior, not in a mental vision as some are inclined to think, but in an actual objective appearance, just as we anticipate seeing our glorified Redeemer at His second advent. His appearance to Paul was as real and personal as it had been in His appearances to His disciples before His ascension. This personal appearance of the Christ to Saul was the turning point in his life. As the resurrection gives an adequate account of the origin of the Christian church; thus actually to have seen Christ gives an adequate account of the transformation of Saul into Paul; taking all the circumstances of the case into reckoning, nothing else does. To see the glorious Form, and to hear the voice of Jesus of Nazareth speaking as from heaven to him, years after He had been accounted dead, buried, and finally disposed of, like any other dead man,—this was a fact

which at one blow brought down in ruins all the creed and all the personal righteousness of Saul of Tarsus. "These Nazarenes, then, whom I have been imprisoning because they said that the crucified One was living again, and even bringing to death when I could not get them to apostatize,—they were right; I have been wrong. My orthodox Judaism has no room for this fact; I must recast it. And who is He whom I have despised, hated, calling Him a 'blasphemer' who deserved to be crucified? I have been mistaken. I have been the blasphemer. I am the sinner—chief of sinners!"

No man can see Christ, and come in personal touch with Him, and go away as he was before. The mighty light which shone around, so that the dazzling brightness of that terrible desert midday sun was eclipsed by it, was only the external part of the miracle. Paul saw something else, heard something else, which his companions did not see or hear. He stood face to face with the majestic tenderness of the transfigured Redeemer; was told that he, the bitter persecutor, had been chosen to be an apostle; that he, the narrow zealot, was to be the prophet of the broadest human religion; that he, the bigoted Jew, was to go far hence among the Gentiles, and suffer for Jesus, his new Master. Trembling, his eyes dark, his soul full of a new light, he rose and went to Damascus, and there

heard from a Christian the words, "Brother Saul, receive thy sight. . . . And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."[1]

[1] Acts 22: 13, 16.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN.

Jesus of Nazareth the Son of God.

Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?—Matt. 16: 13.

For centuries the greatest statesmen, warriors, scholars, and thinkers have been giving answers to our Lord's question, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" From the day when Pilate stood before the infuriated mob in Jerusalem and said: "I find no fault in this man," and, "Behold the man," to the present day personal testimony in answer to the question of the Son of God has been multiplying, until volume upon volume would be required to give the merest extracts from them. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century more than twenty different lives of Christ were written and printed, and hundreds of thousands of these were published and sold all over the world. In this chapter will be found some of the sayings about Jesus uttered by notable pagans, Jews, infidels and Christians.

Pilate's Letter to Claudius Tiberius.

There has lately happened an event which I myself was concerned in. For the Jews through envy have inflicted on themselves and those coming after them dreadful judgments. Their fathers had promises that their God would send to them His Holy One from heaven, who should be called their King,

and He promised to send Him to earth by means of a virgin. He, then, when I was procurator, came into Judea. And they saw Him enlightening the blind, cleansing lepers, healing paralytics, expelling demons from men, raising the dead, walking upon the sea, and doing many other wonders, and all the people of the Jews calling Him the Son of God. Then the chief priests, moved with envy against Him, seized Him and delivered Him to me, and telling me one lie after another, they said that He was a wizard and did contrary to their law. And I, having believed that these things were so, gave Him up, after scourging Him, and they crucified Him, and after He was buried, set guards over Him. But He, while my soldiers were guarding Him, arose on the third day, and to such a degree was the wickedness of the Jews incited against Him that they gave money to the soldiers, saying, "Say that His disciples have stolen His body." But they, having taken the money, were unable to keep silence as to what had happened, for they have testified that they have seen Him after He was risen, and that they have received money from the Jews. These things, therefore, have I reported, that no one should falsely speak otherwise, and that thou shouldst not suppose that falsehoods of the Jews are to be believed.[1]

[1] Antenicene Fathers, vol. 8.

PUBLIUS LENTULUS TO THE ROMAN SENATE.

Conscript Fathers:

There has appeared in these days a man of superlative virtue, named Jesus Christ, who is yet among us; of the Gentiles accepted as a prophet of truth, but His disciples call Him the Son of God. He raiseth the dead, and cureth all manner of disease. A man of stature somewhat tall, and comely, with a very reverend countenance, such as the beholder must both love and fear. His hair the color of a chestnut full ripe, plain to His ears, whence downward it is more orient, curling and waving about His shoulders. In the middle of His head is a seam or parting of His hair, after the manner of the Nazarites; forehead plain and very delicate; His face without spot or wrinkle, beautiful, with a lovely red; His nose and mouth so formed as nothing can represent them; His beard thick, in color like His hair; not over long, but forked in the middle; His look innocent and mature; His eyes gray, or blue, quick and clear. In reproving, He is severe; in admonishing, courteous and fair spoken. His manner of speech is pleasant, but mixed with gravity. It cannot be remembered that any have seen Him laugh, but many have seen Him weep. In proportion of body, most excellent; His hands and arms delectable to behold; in speaking, very temperate,

modest and wise; a man of singular beauty, surpassing the children of men.—*Written in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, by Publius Lentulus, the Roman Procurator in Judea.*

Near the close of the first century Tacitus, the Roman historian, writing about the Christians and their cruel persecution, says: "The founder of that sect was Christ, who had been executed under the reign of Tiberius, under his procurator Pontius Pilate. This pernicious superstition, thus checked for a while, broke out again; and spread not only over Judea, where the evil originated, but through Rome also, whither everything bad upon the earth finds its way, and is practiced. Some who confessed their sect were first seized, and afterwards, by their information, a vast multitude were apprehended, who were convicted, not so much of the crime of burning Rome as of hatred to mankind. Their sufferings at their execution were aggravated by insult and mockery, for some were disguised in the skins of wild beasts, and worried to death by dogs; some were crucified; and others were wrapped in pitch shirts, and set on fire when the day was closed, that they might serve as lights to illuminate the night. Nero lent his own garden for these executions, and exhibited at the same time a mock Circensian entertainment: being a spectator of the whole, in the dress of a charioteer, sometimes

viewing the spectacle from his car. This conduct made the sufferers pitied; and though they were criminals, and deserving the severest punishments, yet they were considered as sacrificed, not so much out of regard for the public good, as to gratify the cruelty of one man."

Testimony of Josephus.

Now, there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call Him a man, for He was a doer of wonderful works,—a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to Him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was (the) Christ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned Him to the cross, A. D. 33, April 3, those that loved Him at the first did not forsake Him, for He appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning Him, and the tribe of Christians, so named from Him, are not extinct at this day.[1]

Our author also tells us that the Sanhedrin of the judges brought Christ before them and that the miseries that fell upon the Jews came "by way of revenge for James the Just, who was the brother of Jesus that was called Christ."

[1] Antiquities of the Jews, book 18, chap. 3.

Rousseau on Christ and Socrates.

How petty are the books of the philosophers, with all their pomp compared with the Gospels! Can it be that writings at once so sublime and so simple are the work of men? Can He whose life they tell be Himself no more than a mere man? Is there anything in His character of the enthusiast or ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in His ways, what touching grace in His teachings! What a loftiness in His maxims, what profound wisdom in His words! What presence of mind, what delicacy and aptness in His replies! What an empire over His passions! Where is the man, where is the sage, who knows how to act, to suffer, and to die without weakness and without display? My friends, men do not invent like this; and the facts respecting Socrates, which no one doubts, are not so well attested as those about Jesus Christ. These Jews could never have struck this tone, or thought of this morality, and the Gospel has characteristics of truthfulness so grand, so striking, so perfectly inimitable, that their inventors would have been more wonderful than He whom they portray. . . . The death of Socrates, peacefully philosophizing among his friends, appears the most agreeable that one could wish; that of Jesus, expiring in agonies, abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible

that one could fear. Socrates, indeed, receiving the cup of poison, blessed the weeping executioner who administered it; but Jesus, amidst excruciating tortures, prayed for His merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a philosopher, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God.

Of Rousseau's testimony Dr. Philip Schaff has this to say: "His remarkable testimony to Christ and the Gospels is the best thing that he ever wrote, and will be remembered the longest. It was written A. D. 1760, and appeared in his work on education."

Napoleon on the Conqueror of the World.

No one will accuse Napoleon with being either a weak-minded man or a pietist. He was a man of giant intellect, although of a depraved nature, and made all Europe tremble at the sound of his voice. While at St. Helena conversing, as was his custom, about the great men of antiquity and drawing comparisons between them and himself, he spoke of Christ in these words: "I think I understand something of human nature, and I tell you all these were men, and I am a man, but not one is like Him; Jesus Christ was more than man. Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and myself founded great empires; but upon what did the creations

of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon love, and to this very day millions would die for Him. . . The Gospel is no mere book, but a living creature, with a vigor, a power, which conquers all that opposes it. Here lies the Book of books upon the table (reverently touching it); I do not tire of reading it, and do so daily with equal pleasure. The soul, charmed with the beauty of the Gospel, is no longer its own: God possesses it entirely: He directs its thoughts and faculties; it is His. What a proof of the divinity of Jesus Christ! Yet in this absolute sovereignty He has but one aim—the spiritual perfection of the individual, the purification of his conscience, his union with what is true, the salvation of his soul. Men wonder at the conquests of Alexander, but here is a conqueror who draws men to Himself for their highest good: who unites to Himself, incorporates into Himself, not a nation, but the whole human race. I am at St. Helena a prisoner chained to a rock. Soon I shall be in my grave. I die before my time; and my dead body must return to the earth, to become food for worms. Behold the destiny, near at hand, of him whom the world called the Great Napoleon! What an abyss between my deep misery and the eternal reign of Christ which is proclaimed, loved, adored, and which is extending over all the earth."

De Wette's Trust in Christ.

The great author, De Wette,—of whom Dr. Geikie says: "Among all the biblical critics of Germany, no one has risen with an intellect more piercing, a learning more vast, and a freedom and fearlessness more unquestioned, than De Wette:"—in his preface to his "Commentary on Revelation" speaks thus of Christ: "This only I know, that there is salvation in no other name than in the name of Jesus Christ, the Crucified, and that nothing loftier offers itself to humanity than the God-manhood realized in Him, and the kingdom of God which He founded—an idea and problem not yet rightly understood and incorporated into the life, even of those who, in other respects, justly rank as the most zealous and warmest Christians! Were Christ in deed and in truth our Life, how could such a falling away from Him be possible? Those in whom He lived would witness so mightily for Him, through their whole life, whether spoken, written, or acted, that unbelief would be forced to silence."

John Stuart Mill.—The Christ Life Best of All.

Mill, logician, philosopher and scholar, refers to Christ in these words: "About the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality combined with profundity of insight which must

place the prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in His inspiration, in the very first rank of those men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer, and martyr to that mission, who ever existed upon earth, religion cannot be said to have made choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete than to endeavor so to live that Christ would approve of our life."

President McKinley's Faith.

William McKinley, twice elected President of the United States, thus briefly expressed his views on the Christian religion: "My belief embraces the divinity of Christ and a recognition of Christianity as the mightiest factor in the world's civilization."

It was only a few brief months after this expression of his belief that the President was called upon to face death. Stricken down by the assassin's bullet, he calmly met his fate. To his stricken wife he said, "Not our will, but God's will be done." Then the watchers by his bedside heard him saying, "Nearer, my God, to thee," and then came the

last words, "Good-bye, all; good-bye. It is God's way. His will be done." With these words on his lips the great, good man sank into his last sleep.

Daniel Webster's Declaration of His Belief.

Bishop James relates that in company with a number of literary men of Boston Webster, when asked whether he could comprehend how Jesus could be both God and man, replied: "No, sir, I cannot; and I should be ashamed to acknowledge Him as my Savior if I could. If I could comprehend Him, He would be no greater than myself; and such is my conviction of accountability to God; such is my sense of sinfulness before Him; and such is my knowledge of my own incapacity to recover myself, that I feel that I need a superhuman Savior." In a letter to Rev. T. Worcester, he declares: "I believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God. The miracles which He wrought establish, in my mind, His personal authority, and render it proper for me to believe whatever He asserts.

"I believe, therefore, all His declarations, as well when He declares Himself the Son of God, as when He declares any other proposition.

"And I believe that there is no other way of salvation than through the merits of the atonement."

Before his death the great statesman dictated his own epitaph, and it is to be found upon his tomb in Marshfield, Mass.:

LORD, I BELIEVE; HELP THOU MINE UNBELIEF.
PHILOSOPHICAL
ARGUMENT, ESPECIALLY THAT
DRAWN FROM THE VASTNESS OF THE UNIVERSE
IN COMPARISON WITH THE APPARENT INSIGNIFICANCE
OF THIS GLOBE, HAS SOMETIMES SHAKEN MY REASON FOR
THE FAITH WHICH IS IN ME; BUT MY HEART HAS AL-
WAYS ASSURED AND REASSURED ME THAT THE
GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST MUST BE A DIVINE
REALITY. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT
CANNOT BE MERELY A HUMAN PRO-
DUCTION.
THIS BELIEF ENTERS INTO THE VERY DEPTH OF MY
CONSCIOUSNESS. THE WHOLE HISTORY OF
MAN PROVES IT.

Washington, Lincoln and Grant.

Washington was a firm believer in prayer and a constant reader of the Bible. Of him John Cotton Smith says: "See the effect of a mother's early faithfulness to the immortal Washington, who suffered not a day to pass over him without consulting his Bible."

The colored men presented President Lincoln a copy of the Bible, and in thanking them for their gift he said: "In regard to the great Book of God I have only to say, it is the best book that God has given

to man. All the good from the Savior of the world is communicated in this Book. I return my sincere thanks for this elegant copy of the great Book of God."

To General Grant the Bible was the light for all human progress, the sheet-anchor of our liberties, and the guide for our future. He says: "Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet-anchor; write its precepts in your hearts and practice them in your lives. To the influence of this Book we are indebted for all progress made in our true civilization, and to this we must look as our guide in the future."

Dickens, the Great Author, Trusts in Christ.

"An angel speaking to a group of shepherds; some travelers following a star; a baby in a manger; a child in a temple; a solemn figure with a mild, beautiful face, raising a dead girl by the hand; again near a city gate, calling back the son of a widow to life; again, dying upon a cross, watched by armed soldiers, a thick darkness coming on, the earth beginning to shake, and the only voice heard—'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' . . I commit my soul to the mercy of God through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and I exhort my dear children to try to guide themselves by the teachings of the New Testament."

GLADSTONE, ENGLAND'S GREATEST STATESMAN.

"Our Savior astonished people because, instead of being lost in the mazes of arbitrary and vicious excrescences that darkened the face of religion, He taught them 'with authority and not as the scribes.' Taught them with authority, that is to say, with the title to command, and with the force to command. If God has given us a revelation of His will, whether in the laws of our nature, or in the kingdom of grace, that revelation not only illuminates, but binds. Like the credentials of an earthly ambassador, it is just as necessary that the credentials of that revelation should be tested. But if found to be genuine, if we have proofs of its being genuine, equal to those of which, in the ordinary concerns of life, reason acknowledges the obligatory character, then we find ourselves to be not independent beings engaged in an optional inquiry, but the servants of a Master, the pupils of a Teacher, the children of a Father, and each of us already bound with the bonds which those relations imply. Then head and knee must bow before the Eternal, and the Divine Will must be embraced and followed by man with all his heart, with all his mind, with all his soul, and with all his strength."

EDWIN ARNOLD IN CHRIST THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

"High cause had they in Bethlehem that night
To lift the curtain of Hope's hidden light,

To break decree of silence with love's cry,
Foreseeing how this Babe, born lowlily,
Should—past dispute, since now achieved in this—
Bring Earth great gifts of blessing and of bliss.

* * *

The cruel Cross—oh, Tree, which made its wood,
Who planted thee? Did birds nest in thy boughs
And sunshine light thy leaves?—the cruel Cross.

* * *

He showed himself in full midst of Jerusalem,
Amongst the eleven,—nail-marks on hands and feet,
Rose-red, and spear-gashed scarring the white side;
And ate of fish and honey from their board;
Then blessed, and led them forth to Olivet;
And passed—as if, they said, a waiting cloud
Received Him out of sight."

Hillis on the Literature of the New Testament.

"Though nearly three centuries have passed, Shakespeare has had but twelve great students of four nationalities who have given us great commentaries upon those immortal dramas. No young scholar has felt so interested in the Bard of Stratford that he has gone to some province in Africa in order to give his beloved poet to the people, or formulated their rude speech into written language, yet during the nineteenth century the intellectual stimulus of Christ's story has been such that more than two hundred dictionaries and grammars, in as many dialects and languages, have been compiled for the furtherance of Christ's thoughts and the enrichment of men's

lives. . . In view of His influence upon law, literature, letters and life, it seems hard not to believe in Christ's supremacy in intellect. For some reason, no author has ever spoken of Christ as earth's supreme literary artist. Men have discussed His ideas of childhood, home, friendship and heaven, but they have held themselves well away from all word as to the marvelous skill with which He formulated thoughts so melodious that, though they have been translated twice, they still breathe the sound of ethereal music. Christ's thoughts, injured by translators and marred by copyists, seem like those precious marbles from the hand of Phidias, the very fragments of which are so beautiful as to evoke the admiration of all beholders. Nevertheless, His words, as quoted by His four biographers, represent in form and thought the highest products of genius that the literary art has ever produced."

Dr. Emil Hirsch, Jewish Rabbi of Chicago.

The scholarly Jewish Rabbi asked some questions at the Religious Parliament which may well demand the serious attention of Christians: "Were those marked for glory by the great Teacher of Nazareth who wore the largest phylacteries? Did Jesus regard the temple only as holy? Did not the prayer of the great Master of Nazareth teach all and all ages that prayer must be the stirring of love? Can

an unforgiving heart pray, 'Forgive as we forgive'? Can one ask for daily bread when he refuses to break bread with the hungry?"

At Atlanta, Georgia, the Rabbi made a strong plea against the generally accepted and oft-repeated assertion that the Jews put Jesus to death. He said: "At the time Jesus was killed, the Jews had been deprived of the right to inflict the death penalty. Furthermore, crucifixion was a Roman and not a Hebrew mode of killing; the Romans and not the Jews put Jesus to death. The modern Jews claim Jesus as one of their greatest teachers and place Him in the front rank of their prophets."

Ingersoll Pays Tribute to Christ.

Ingersoll, in his better moments, thought most highly of Christ. Who could have written more pathetically of the Master than did the gifted infidel when he said: "For the man Christ who loved His fellow-men and believed in an Infinite Father who would shield the innocent and protect the just; for the martyr who expected to be rescued from the cruel cross, and who at last, finding that His hope was dust, cried out in the gathering gloom, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?' for that great and suffering man I have the highest admiration and respect. They crucified a kind and perfectly innocent man. In all ages some brave lover of truth heroically faces the ig-

norant fury of superstition for the sake of man and truth. Socrates was poisoned, Christ was crucified. Christ was the reformer of His day, and His life was destroyed by hypocrites. Had I lived in His day, I would have been His friend; and should He ever come again while I am here, He will find no better friend than I will be. His life is worth its example—its moral force, its heroism of benevolence. For that name I have infinite respect and love. To that great and serene man I gladly pay the homage of my admiration and my tears. . . The place where man has died for man is holy ground."

Renan on a Perfect Model.

"In Jesus is condensed all that is good and exalted in our nature. He is without equal. He is to judge the world. He is at God's right hand. His is the highest consciousness that has existed in the human breast. He draws from His heart all that He says of the Father. God is in Him. He forgives sin. He was the glory of the people of Israel who crucified Him, the perfect Model on which all souls meditate for consolation and strength. His Father gave to Him all power. Nature obeys Him. His was the benign religion of humanity; the absolute religion. After passing through cycles of error, humanity will return to the words of Jesus as the immortal expression of faith and hope. He founded the

right of free conscience and a pure worship for all times and climes. . . Whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed. His worship will grow young without ceasing, His story call forth tears without end. His sufferings will melt the noblest hearts, and all ages will proclaim that among the sons of men there is none born greater than Jesus."

Bishop Foss's Answer.

"Suppose that Christ were now to come in at yonder door, and, standing before us in meek self-evidence—for we will never need be introduced to Him—should ask as He asked His disciples once, 'Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?' O, if I might be your joyful spokesman, I would tell Him, 'O, blessed Christ, the world has not forgotten Thee: biographies of Thee are in all libraries.' 'But who do men say that I am?' If my tongue did not cling to the roof of my mouth, I would say, 'Some say that Thou art a myth, a fancy portrait, and that a myth has changed the face of the world!' And then suppose that He should demand of us, 'But who say ye that I am?' O, if again I might be your happy spokesman, on bended knees and with streaming eyes I would cry, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, Thyself very man and very God.'"

GEIKIE ON CHRIST'S CHARACTER.

"He demands repentance for all, but never for a moment hints at any need of it for Himself. With all His matchless lowliness, He advances personal claims which, in a mere man, would be the very delirium of religious pride. He was divinely patient under every form of suffering,—a homeless life, hunger and thirst, craft and violence, meanness and pride, the taunts of enemies and betrayal of friends, ending in an ignominious death. Nothing of all this for a moment turned Him from His chosen path of love and pity. His last words, like His whole life, were a prayer for those who returned Him evil for good. His absolute superiority to everything narrow or local, so that He, a Jew, founded a religion in which all mankind are a common brotherhood, equal before God; the dignity, calmness, and self-possession before rulers, priests, and governors, which sets Him immeasurably above them; His freedom from superstition, in an age which was superstitious almost beyond example; His superiority to the merely external and ritual, in an age when rites and externals were the sum of religion: all these considerations, to mention no others, explain the mysterious attraction of His character, even when looked at merely as an ideal Man."

And so the words of the learned and great men, as the world counts greatness, might be quoted until

the closing chapter of this book was written, and then but a tithe of all that has been said and written in answer to Christ's question could be given. Pagan, infidel, Jew, and Christian alike bear testimony to His wonderful life and character, the exalted morality of His teaching, and the great power of His example. He was approved of God by miracles, but His life was the greatest of all miracles ever wrought. He taught and spoke as never man taught and spoke, and there is but one answer to the question, "Who do men say that I the Son of man am?" That answer, given by a poor, illiterate fisherman of Galilee, revealed unto him by the Father in heaven, will stand when heaven and earth shall pass away, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

CHAPTER SIXTEEN.

Agreement Between the Land and the Book.

A strong evidence of the truth of God's Book is to be found in the remarkable agreement between the Book itself and the land where it was written. Upon landing at Joppa the traveler in Palestine is at once struck with the fact that very many of the old-time customs common in Palestine when the Bible was written are adhered to to-day with all the pertinacity of Oriental conservatism. As he continues his journey to Jerusalem, to Bethlehem, to Hebron, to the valley of the Jordan and the Dead Sea, to Samaria, Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee, and to Mount Hermon and the northern boundary of the land, he will be surprised again and again to see the customs of two and three thousand years ago lingering in the lap of the twentieth century of the Christian era. There are so many striking points of agreement between the land and the Book that one is forced to say that in no other country could the Bible have been written, for in no other land are to be found the conditions so definitely stated and so clearly set forth in the Bible. And this agreement confirms our faith in the Book.

If one of our friends, in whom we had implicit

confidence, should visit the capital of our country and write a book descriptive of Washington City, telling about the Capitol, the White House, the Congressional Library, the Patent Office, the Smithsonian Institute, the National Museum, the Washington Monument, and other places of general interest, we would accept his statements as being correct; but if later on we should visit the place ourselves and find the conditions agreeing, even in the minutest detail, with what our friend had given us in his work, it would tend to confirm our faith in his truthfulness and veracity. The same is true of Palestine and the Bible. No one can visit the Holy Land with open eyes without being impressed with the truth of the statement that the Book was written there, and nowhere else. As one sees two women grinding at the mill, the shepherd leading his flock, the farmer in his harvest field and on his threshing floor, the gleaners in the field, the merchant measuring grain, the one-handled plow, the sower casting seed on the ground, the husbandman pruning his vines, the unmuzzled ox treading out the corn, the blind beggars by the wayside, the lepers crying out "Unclean! unclean!" the tares growing among the wheat, the potter at his wheel, the villagers dividing the land by lot, and scores of similar illustrations, he is filled with astonishment and is ready to say, Of a verity the Book of God is true. Seeing these also reveals how

Jesus selected His illustrations from among those things with which the common people were familiar and used them to teach the most important truths ever revealed to the world. Let us briefly examine some of these customs of the past and observe how wonderfully they agree with the Bible.

Measuring Grain.

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.—Luke 6: 38.

In Jerusalem I saw the merchant and the buyer measuring the grain that was bought and sold in the market place. The measure is seized with both hands and partly filled with grain and is then shaken most vigorously. After this more grain is put in and again the shaking process is repeated until the grain is thoroughly shaken together. Then more grain is added and pressed down in the measure with both hands until one is thoroughly convinced the measurer is determined to get all the grain possible into and on the measure. He heaps it up, pressing the grain on; and when you think it impossible for him to add any more, he makes a hole in the top of the heap on the measure and then takes up a handful of grain and allows it to run from his hand into the hole until it fills up and up and runs over all around the measure. Then the purchaser care-

Measuring Grain in Jerusalem.

fully puts the mouth of the sack over the measure, and thus secures every grain on the overrunning measure when it is emptied into his cloth. I watched the measuring a number of times and always with intense interest. Each time my mind reverted to the words of the Master who, when He was in Palestine, witnessed just such measuring as is here described. And He not only witnessed it but used it to illustrate one of the great truths He gave to humanity.

Wheat and Tares.

But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat. . . . Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up the wheat also.—Matt. 13: 25, 28, 29.

On our way from Jerusalem to Ain-Karen we passed many wheat fields fully headed out, for the time of harvest was near at hand. And now as the blade had sprung up and put forth fruit, behold the tares, which were not visible before, appeared also. These grow much taller than the wheat and were to be seen from the roadside, waving above the fruitful field. As when the Master was in Palestine, so now, the husbandman either pulls up the tares by the roots, taking some wheat at the same time, or suffers both to grow together until the harvest, when they are gathered into bundles and burned. The stalk, when the tares are ripe, is hard and tasteless, and

is fit only for fuel. "Wilt thou then that we go and gather them?" shows most conclusively that this was one of the common methods of disposing of the tares. So now, as then, before they are fully ripe they are often plucked up by the root and fed to the cattle. In rambling about the country just at the harvest time one often meets men and women who have on their heads and backs great bundles of tares which they have gathered for food for their animals. But in plucking up the tares, be they ever so careful, they also root up more or less of the wheat. Many farmers, even unto this day, adopt the plan of the householder of whom Jesus spoke, and let both grow together until harvest, when the tares are gathered into bundles and burned. Wishing to bring a handful of tares home with me I went into a wheat field by permission of the owner and plucked them up. I observed the greatest care in trying to uproot the tares without pulling up the wheat also. But I found this impossible to do. Upon examination it was found that the roots of the tares were so intertwined with the wheat that it was impossible to pluck up the one without uprooting the other. How literally in every single detail do the tares growing among the wheat fit into the parable of our Lord. How carefully He must have studied these things.

Tares from Palestine.

The Pet Lamb.

But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up; and it grew up with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.—2 Sam. 12: 3.

There are few more beautiful pictures in the Bible than this, and yet one can scarcely get the full force and strength of this most pathetic illustration used by the prophet to bring conscious conviction to Israel's sinning king, unless something is known of the tenderness of feeling and the affection and love manifested in the family for the pet lamb. Nathan drew his story from real life and it touched the heart of David because of its naturalness. Nearly thirty centuries have gone since the story of the ewe lamb was told, and still the pet lamb is as common in the City of David to-day as it was then. A thousand instances of the same kind are to be found in Palestine now,—the pet lamb growing up in the family with the children, their constant playfellow, eating from their hands a portion of their food, slaking its thirst from their drinking cups, sleeping in the bosom of its owner, even as one of his own children. And when the lamb dies or is taken away, there are tears in the home, for the love for the pet is real and genuine. Scores and scores of times have I seen, in my rambles about the country and the city, men and women, boys and girls, leading their pet

lambs by a single cord, or a ribbon, or oftener still by the stronger and more enduring cord of love. Once as I walked down David street in Jerusalem I saw a boy racing with his pet lamb playfully following him. I stopped and watched the playful antics of the two, and then thought what a sad heart the boy would have were his lamb taken away from him. Later on I saw a lad sitting by the wayside and his lamb closely nestled by his side asleep,—literally asleep in his bosom. And so one finds in the relation of the pet lamb and its owner to-day what the prophet Nathan found in it so many centuries ago, when he reproved David for his most grievous sin. But the love and tenderness of this most beautiful and touching relation, which is as strong as that between an affectionate son or daughter and a loving father, finds its highest exemplification when the forerunner of our Lord finds in it a most tender and fitting name for the Savior of the world—" BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD."

The Descendants of Ishmael.

And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. . . . Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly.—Gen. 16: 12; 17: 20.

So spake the angel of God concerning the unborn child of Abraham and Hagar; and no prophecy ever

Descendants of Ishmael.

Dwelling in Tabernacles.

uttered has been more literally fulfilled than this. One only needs to visit the Arab in his tabernacle in the East and note his way of living and his manners and customs to be led to say, without the slightest hesitancy, "Indeed and in truth have the words of the Lord spoken to Hagar concerning the descendants of Ishmael been fulfilled to the very letter." They have multiplied and multiplied exceedingly, until no one can tell their number. They are a wild, roving people now as they have been for all the centuries that have passed since they became a nation. They have dwelt in tents, or tabernacles, in the presence of their brethren, the Jews and other descendants of Abraham, for more than three thousand years, and they dwell in tents even unto this very day. Their hand is against every man and every man's hand is against them, and this they are free to tell you if you visit them in their desert homes. When Volney said the Arabs are "armed against mankind," he did not realize that he was bearing testimony to the truth of the Bible as evidenced in the fulfillment of prophecy. In 1884, in riding from Damascus to Baalbek, the writer had a literal illustration of the fighting qualities of these people. Our party was surrounded by a howling, yelling mob of them, and we had every man's hand against us. That we escaped without injury was one of the marvels of our long ride through Palestine and Syria. That these people should have kept

their identity and clung to manners and customs through all the centuries that have passed since God spoke concerning them, surrounded as they have been by nations living in luxury and enjoying many of the advantages of civilization, is one of the wonders of prophecy. And yet not wonderful when it is remembered that God knows the end from the beginning.

The Shepherd and his Flock.

How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.—Matt. 18:12, 13.

In 1899 in company with several friends the writer rambled over Mount Scopus and Olivet. On the hillside northwest of Jerusalem we met a shepherd leading his flock to a bit of green pasture down the valley. He went before the sheep calling, and they followed him. Presently two of the flock became separated from the rest and strayed up the hillside away from the shepherd. Observing them he lifted up his voice and called to the straying sheep, and one of them turned back and rejoined the flock. The other wandered away and was lost sight of among the rocks on the mountain side. Then the shepherd gathered his flock close together and left it and went after that which had strayed away and was lost. When he

found it he laid it on his shoulder and carried it safely back to the flock. It was a most striking illustration of the words of our Savior; and such scenes as this He must have witnessed many times in Palestine. To us it was confirmatory of the truth of the Bible, showing in every detail the same conditions that existed when Jesus made use of the incident to illustrate in such a forcible manner the loving care of the Divine Shepherd for His sheep and the joy occasioned over the return of the wanderer.

One cannot witness the relation existing between the shepherd and his flock in the Holy Land without having his mind continually reverting to the scriptural allusions to the shepherd and his flock. Along the valleys and on the hillsides—wherever the grass grows—you may see the shepherd leading his flock. As in the days of the Shepherd King who said, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want," and in the days when our Lord, the great SHEPHERD led His sheep about Palestine, so to-day the shepherds in the Holy Land lead their sheep and call them by name. The Savior said: "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine;" and again: "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of

strangers." How many times in Syria have I seen the shepherds leading their flocks! Among the hills which encompass Jerusalem on every side, on the plains about Bethlehem, where the shepherds in the olden time watched their flocks by night, in the valley of the Jordan, along the shores of the Sea of Galilee, over Hermon and Lebanon, and by the waters of Abana and Pharpar, have I witnessed the shepherd going before his flock and calling his sheep by name, and the sheep following their leader. Once in a valley south of Jerusalem I saw a shepherd leading his flock to green pastures. I called to the sheep, but at the sound of my voice they fled away affrighted, not knowing the voice of the stranger. Often in the evening time you may hear a shepherd calling from a hilltop to a companion in the valley below, asking whether there are any stray sheep in his flock. The answer is: "Call, and I will see." The shepherd whose sheep have gone astray then gives a peculiar call with which his sheep are familiar, and his stray sheep at once lift up their heads, while the rest of the flock go on grazing as if nothing had happened. The sheep know their shepherd's voice. The entire relation between the shepherd and his flock is most tender and touching, and it most beautifully illustrates the tender care and the wonderful love manifested by the Good Shepherd for His sheep. "He

Shepherd and His Flock.

shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom."

The Sheep and the Goats.

And He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.—Matt. 25: 32.

You may see the sheep and goats pasturing together in Palestine, the same shepherd watching over both. But when evening comes the shepherd divides his flock, the sheep going to one side and the goats to the other. The Master uses this custom to illustrate the important truth that at the day of judgment there will be a separation of the righteous from the wicked. It is worthy of note that in dividing his flock the shepherd has but little difficulty. By usage the sheep know their places, and the goats likewise theirs. Will it be so in the day of all days when the Judge shall sit upon His throne? He says, "And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him: the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

Dogs.

And at evening let them return; and let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city. Let them wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied.

. . . For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.—Psa. 59: 14, 15; Rev. 22: 15.

It would be impossible for us, without a knowledge of conditions in the Land where the Book was written, to understand the Bible allusion to the dog. With our views of the love and faithfulness of this noble domestic animal, the contempt in which he is held by all the Bible writers is inexplicable. In our homes we do not have a more intelligent, faithful, obedient animal than the dog, and his faithfulness to and his love for his master have passed into proverbs. Why, then, does the Bible invariably place such a low estimate on the canine? Why is he mentioned only in terms of contempt in the Book? Under the law of Moses these animals were considered unclean and unfit for human association, and wherever reference is made to them only offensive expressions are used. Among the Jews no greater insult could be offered to a man than to compare him to a dead dog. The name is applied to any one who has lost all modesty and who prostitutes himself by committing any abominable practice. In the New Testament they are classed among idolaters, murderers, sorcerers and whoremongers, and the Psalmist applies the name dog to the devil when he says, "Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog."

Dogs of Palestine.

But one only need visit the towns and cities of Palestine and the Orient to understand fully why dogs are held in such low estimation and why only terms of contempt are used when they are spoken of. In Jerusalem, Damascus, Smyrna, Constantinople and other Oriental towns and cities great numbers of dogs infest the streets and make night hideous with their snarling, barking and howling. They are houseless, homeless and ownerless, and are veritable street scavengers, living on refuse and carrion. They are poor, lean and mangy, and in some places are so numerous that it is not only difficult but at times dangerous to go about the streets. The writer has often been compelled to leave the sidewalk and walk in the street to avoid a disreputable lot of dogs. By some instinct they combine into gangs and these have a well defined portion of the city as their own, and woe to the luckless, hairless, mangy cur that wanders on forbidden ground. When this occurs a dead dog is the result, and when a number invade hostile territory as they often do at night the howling and barking and fighting are incessant and preclude all possibility of sleep. After spending a few months in an Oriental city one is quite ready to accept the low estimate placed on dogs in the Bible.

The Broadened Phylacteries.

But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments.—Matt. 23: 5.

The Jews gave a literal interpretation to Ex. 13: 8, 9, 16: "And thou shalt tell thy son in that day; saying, It is because of that which Jehovah did for me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thy hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the law of Jehovah may be in thy mouth. And it shall be for a sign upon thy hand, and for a frontlet between thine eyes: for by strength of hand Jehovah brought us forth out of Egypt." For nearly three thousand years the Jews have worn, in some form or other, portions of the law as a sign upon the forearm and as a frontlet between the eyes. Since the time of our Lord very little, if any, change has been made in the form of the phylacteries. The word is Greek, and its literal meaning is a safeguard. In the synagogues in Jerusalem and among orthodox Jews the world over the phylactery (tephellin in the Hebrew) is worn in time of prayer. Great care has always been taken in making phylacteries. Those in possession of the writer are made of black calfskin and are in the shape of cubes about two inches square, fitted with long, narrow leather straps used to fasten the leathern cases on the head and to the arm.

Phylacteries on Arm and Forehead.

The calfskin used in making them is most carefully prepared and the slips of parchment on which are inscribed Deut. 6: 4-9; 11: 13-21; Ex. 13: 1-10, 11-16, which are placed in the boxes, are written with specially prepared ink with minute accuracy and neatness. The phylacteries for the head are divided into four cavities, in each one of which is placed one of the four texts referred to; those for the arm have but a single cavity containing all four texts written on a single piece of parchment. In placing the phylactery on the arm it is bared to the elbow and the leather case is fastened to the inside of the arm so as to cross the heart when the arm is folded in prayer. The strap by which it is fastened is wrapped five times around the arm and then twice over and between the fingers. The phylacteries were worn by the men only. The common people wore them during prayers, but the Pharisees in order to make a show of the form of religion wore them all the time and broadened and enlarged them so that all could see their prayer fillets. It was because of this that the Savior rebuked them for making "broad their phylacteries." He did not condemn the wearing of them, but the show and ostentation connected with it. Instead of being a reminder of what God had done for His people, they had become badges of vanity and hypocrisy.

Jot and Tittle of the Law.

For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.—Matt. 5: 18.

The rolls of the law now used in the synagogues are similar to those used in the time of Christ. They are prepared with the greatest possible care. The writing is all done by hand, the letters being formed with great accuracy, and the written page is extremely neat in appearance. Prof. Hackett, speaking of the work of the Jewish scribe, says: "A more elegant Hebrew manuscript, a more perfect specimen of the caligraphic art, I never saw than that executed by the Jewish amanuensis. No printed page could surpass it in the beauty, symmetry and distinctness with which the characters were drawn. One peculiarity that struck me at once, as I cast my eye over the parchment, was the horn-like appearance attached to some of the letters." The horn-like ornament appended to some of the Hebrew letters is the "tittle" referred to in the text. It is more prominent in some manuscripts than in others. The jot refers to the *yodh,* the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet, and it has one of the horn-like ornaments. The illustration shows how exceedingly jealous God is of His Word. A stronger illustration could not have been used to show that no part of God's law should pass unfulfilled. It would be

the same as saying, if the law had been originally written in the English language, that not a single "i" or a dot above a "j" should pass until all be fulfilled.

The Bed of Palestine.

Not only in Jerusalem, but in other Eastern cities, one often meets men carrying their beds. It was an easy task for the paralytic whom the Master healed to roll up his bed, take it up under his arm or lay it upon his shoulder and carry it away. As now, so then, the bed was simply a mat, blanket or quilt. The very poor have only the large outer garment, called the abba, for a bed. They lie on one side of this and use the remainder for a cover. I have seen people asleep on the street in the cities of Palestine and Egypt with only the outer garment for bed and covering. It was because of this custom of using the raiment for a bed that Moses stipulated in the law, "If a man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge; in any case thou shalt deliver him the pledge again when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment." Deut. 12: 13. It was very common among the Jews to give part of their garments as a pledge for the payment of money borrowed; hence the law forbade the keeping of the raiment of the poor after the going down of the sun. Job, speaking of the works of the wicked, says:

"They cause the naked to lodge without clothing, that they have no covering in the cold. They are wet with the showers of the mountains, and embrace the rock for want of shelter."[1] Wealthy people in the East have quilts and mattresses filled with cotton

A Street Sleeper.

which they use for beds. In the bazaars in Jerusalem may be seen the manufacture of the bedding in common use among the well-to-do people of the city, but any of these beds may easily be rolled up and carried under the arm or over the shoulder

[1] Job 24: 7, 8.

When the man sick with the palsy was being borne to the house and let down through the roof into the room where Jesus stood, the sick was lying on a quilt or mattress as here described. The men would take the bed by its four corners and kneeling down on the roof would lower it as stated in the narrative. When the man was healed by the word of the Lord, at His command he rolled up his bed, placed it under his arm or across his shoulder and departed to his own house. The conditions to be found in Palestine to-day agree so precisely in detail with the incident here related that if our Lord were to come to Palestine to-day the same thing could be repeated, and in giving an account of it the same language could be used.

Thunder and Rain in Harvest Time.

Is it not wheat harvest to-day? I will call unto the Lord, and He shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a king. So Samuel called unto the Lord; and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day: and the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel.—1 Sam. 12: 17, 18.

The children of Israel had sinned, and the prophet in rebuking them gave them a miraculous manifestation of the power of God. It was in the summer and in the time when the harvest was being gathered, and he told the people that he would ask the Lord to send thunder and rain so that all the

people might know that they had sinned and that God was not pleased with them. In our own country if a prophet attempted to show his right to the name by saying he would call for rain in harvest time he would at once be met with the fact that thunder and rain storms are of frequent occurrence in the season of harvest. No one here would pay any attention to a prophetic claim based on a test of this kind. But in Palestine the conditions are such that the coming of a storm in the time of harvest would be a miracle. The rainy season begins about the middle of November and ends not far from the spring equinox. Rainfall in the summer months, and especially during harvest time, is practically unknown. So when Samuel called upon the Lord and the dark clouds overcast the sky and the lightnings flashed, and the thunder rolled and the rain descended, the people were amazed; a great miracle had been wrought, and they all greatly feared God and His prophet.

The Potter's Broken Vessel.

And He shall break it as the breaking of the potter's vessel that is broken in pieces; He shall not spare; so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit.—Isa. 30: 14.

Inside the Damascus gate at Jerusalem I saw a potter sitting at his frame turning his wheel with

his foot. I made many visits to this potter, for here was in full operation the Bible description of the "potter who sitteth at his work, and turning the wheel about with his foot fashioneth the clay with his arm." By his side the potter had a pile of tempered clay mixed and ready for moulding. Taking a lump of the plastic material in his hand, he placed it on top of the circular board or wheel, which revolves horizontally, and turning the wheel with his foot he shaped the clay into a cone, then thrusting his thumb into the top of the cone the vessel began assuming shape under his hand and arm. By his side sat a water jar filled with water. Into this he occasionally dipped his hand and thus smoothed and shaped the vessel. The plastic clay yielded to his skillful touch, and he made of it such a vessel as best pleased him. Watching the potter one finds the key to many Bible allusions to his work. Jeremiah[1] refers to the potter doing with the clay as seemeth good to him: "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in Mine hand, O house of Israel." If you watch the potter you will see him, once in a great while, mar the vessel he is forming, perhaps because he has not taken a sufficient amount of clay to finish it, or

[1] Jer. 18: 6.

for some other cause, and then he will change it from what he at first intended. So the prophet Jeremiah saw the same operation and referred to it in these words: "And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it." The pottery is very fragile and easily broken, and is also very cheap. For a few pennies you may purchase a large water jar at Joppa or Jerusalem. To the cheapness of pottery is due the rule among the Jews to break an earthen vessel that has become unclean. The cost of purifying would be greater than the first cost of the vessel. "And every earthen vessel, whereinto any of them falleth, whatsoever is in it shall be unclean; and ye shall break it." [1]

Dr. Thomson calls attention to the custom of taking coals from the hearth and dipping water from the pit with pieces of broken pottery, called potsherds in the Bible. It is very common to find at the spring or pit pieces of broken jars, to be used as ladles, either to drink from or fill with; bits of fractured jars are preserved for this purpose. If you will take your stand near any of the public ovens here in Joppa in the evening, you will see the children of the poor coming with sherds of pottery in their hands,

[1] Lev. 11: 33.

into which the baker pours a small quantity of hot embers and a few coals with which to warm up their evening meal. Isaiah's vessels, however, were to be broken into such small bits that there would not be a sherd of sufficient size to carry away a few embers from the hearth, or to take water out of the pit. These comparisons are exceedingly expressive where the actions referred to are of constant occurrence, as they are throughout this country at the present day.[1]

Women Grinding at the Mill.

Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.—Matt. 24: 41.

Nearly two thousand years have passed away since our Lord used the words in the text, and yet women are grinding at the mill in Palestine to-day as they did then. One is often led to exclaim, How remarkable it is that these old customs should have continued in the Holy Land for all these centuries without a single change. May it not be that the hand of God is in all this? In these things we have a wonderful proof of the truth of His Word, and now that the ancient customs spoken of in the Bible have been photographed they are slowly passing away. But the evidence is secure. The old-time hand mill is being superseded in many places by the

[1] The Land and the Book, p. 37.

modern mill. In Jerusalem I saw a very good steam mill in operation, with bolting apparatus and everything complete. Twenty years ago it was most difficult to procure bolted flour in traveling through Palestine. Then in every village could be seen women grinding at the mill. I frequently put my hand to the mills in common use and found that it requires considerable strength to do the grinding. Two women sit on the ground with the mill between them, and putting their hands to the long wooden pin in the outer edge of the upper stone it is turned around while the grain is fed into the hole in the center. So the grinding is done, and as one looks at the operation he is most forcibly reminded that he is witnessing a scene looked upon by Jesus when He was on earth, and that He used this very common occurrence to illustrate one of the important truths which He taught to the world.

Allusion is doubtless had to the millstone then in common use in Palestine when the Lord said: "It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones." [1] I recall how very hard it was for me to understand this Scripture in my boyhood days. The only millstone I then had in mind was the great, heavy burr stones used in my father's mill in Maryland. The upper stone would

[1] Luke 17: 2.

Two Women Grinding at a Mill.

weigh not less than two tons. It seemed that it would be impossible to hang this immense mass of stone and stucco about a man's neck and cast man and stone into the sea. It was too much for my imagination, and it was set aside as one of the mysteries of the Bible. But when I saw the hand and donkey mills of Palestine the mystery was solved, and the difficulty disappeared. The millstone weighing from fifty to one hundred pounds could easily be hanged about a man's neck and both thrown into the sea. The latter would render all hope of escape impossible, and do the work just as effectually as the heavy stones of my father's mill. The continuance of these ancient customs makes a deep and lasting impression on the mind of the traveler as he journeys in the Land where the Book was written, and if he travels with open eyes and open heart to see and receive the truth, they afford him so many striking evidences that the Book is true.

Plowing and Sowing the Seed.

And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.—Luke 9: 62.

Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up.—Matt. 13: 3, 4.

The one-handled plows that have been in use on the plains and valleys of Palestine since the days of Abraham are still in use. The apt illustration used by our Savior in the text shows that the one-handled

plow of to-day was used when He taught the great lessons of the Gospel nearly two thousand years ago. The plows I examined were very simple in construction. A strong, tough piece of wood about three and a half feet long serves as a post, to one end of which is fastened the plowshare and to the other the

Plow of Palestine.

handle. Near the center is mortised a hole, into which a long pole is securely fastened, which may be called a beam or, better still, a tongue. It is long enough to reach to the yoke on the necks of the oxen, to which it is fastened by a rope or piece of rawhide. One end of the post is sometimes armed with a piece of iron properly shaped. This is the

plowshare to which reference is made in Joel 3:10. The upper end of the post is fitted with a short, round crosspiece of wood, which serves as a handle. With one hand the farmer grasps the handle of his plow and with his oxgoad drives forward his yoke of oxen. He must look forward and not backward if he would plow. I tried the plow in Palestine, and I found that if I plowed at all I must pay the closest attention to the work in hand. On our prairies in the West one may plow and look back as many times as inclination suggests, but not so in Palestine. There, if he who puts his hand to the plow would accomplish any work, he must look forward all the time. The lesson taught by the Savior is apparent. The Christian must look forward, and not backward, if he is to become fit for the kingdom of God.

On the plains of Sharon I saw the farmers plowing and preparing their fields for the seed, which the sower casts on the ground from his hand. Broadcast sowing is the proper term to apply to the operation, and as he nears the end of his field along which a roadway passes, some of the seed falls upon the hard, beaten track of the wayside. Here the birds soon discover it and it is quickly devoured. The other conditions named in the parable are all to be found in existing conditions in Palestine at the present time. The plowing, the seed falling on the wayside, among the thorns, on stony ground, and on good

soil are all to be seen there to-day as they were witnessed by our Savior and used by Him in teaching the common affairs of life and the common people heard Him gladly, because He spoke to them in words which they could easily understand.

Dwelling Places in the Tombs.

And when He was come out of the ship, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains.—Mark 5: 2, 3.

The tombs excavated in the solid rock were sometimes used as dwellings for poor people, abodes for the insane and hiding places for criminals. Because of their extent they afforded excellent facilities for the latter class. In excavating the tombs an opening was made in the face of the perpendicular rock which served as a door to the chambers to be chiseled out within. The rooms varied in size, depending on the wealth and desire of the owner, and were from six to twenty feet square and six to eight feet in height from floor to ceiling. In the tomb of the kings at the head of the valley of Jehoshaphat is a chamber nineteen feet square. These inner chambers were excavated with much labor and great care. The rock is a hard limestone and the chambers are cut out square as to floor, sides and ceiling. On either side of the walls are narrow cells or niches in which the bodies of the dead after being wrapped in grave-

clothes, were placed, in some instances each in its own receptacle. Sometimes the rooms were arranged without cells, and then stone coffins were set on the floor and the dead placed in them.

For centuries the lepers at Jerusalem found lodging places in the tombs around and about the city, which were no longer used for their original purpose. It was very natural that the man with an unclean spirit should have found a dwelling place in the chambers of the dead. South of Jerusalem and a short distance west of the junction of the valleys of the Kidron and Hinnom are a large number of tombs cut in the solid rock, having been excavated in ancient times. Over some of these a building has been erected and when I last visited the place, during holy week in 1899, it was used as a lodging place by the Russian pilgrims who thronged the Holy City. One of the larger tomb chambers was being used by the enterprising cook as a kitchen. The cells or niches cut into the sides of the room, and once used as receptacles for the dead, served the cook as convenient places for cooking utensils and for food for the living. In some of the chambers the bones of the dead are still to be seen, and taken all together it impressed me as being a ghastly lodging place.

The Lepers and the Leprosy.

And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper

lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean. All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be.—Lev. 13: 45, 46.

And behold, there came a leper and worshiped Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth His hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.—Matt. 8: 2, 3.

The groups of lepers to be seen sitting by the roadside as you approach the towns and cities of the Holy Land are one among the most painful and pitiable sights to be witnessed in Palestine. At Jaffa, at Ramleh, at Jerusalem, at Nazareth, at Damascus and at many other places I have seen these poor, deformed, miserable wrecks and remnants of humanity, sitting by the wayside with their deformities and unsightly sores exposed to public view crying out, in their abject poverty and misery, to the passers-by: "Poor, poor, unclean, unclean lepers; please help us; please give us alms." It is a sight that may well move the hardest heart to pity and sympathy, and once seen is never to be forgotten. As it was in the days of Moses, so now the lepers are compelled to find lodging places outside the camp or the walls of town or city. At Jerusalem a lepers' home has been founded by good Christian people of Europe and the United States where the poverty-stricken, miserable lepers may find comparatively comfortable quarters.

Group of Lepers.

Previously they dwelt in the disused tombs around about Jerusalem. When one is known to have the leprosy he is at once separated from his family and driven from his home, and is virtually counted among the dead. If he have property it is administered upon, his estate is settled up and his home and his place know him no more. After the separation the leper finds his home with those similarly afflicted and becomes one of the leper community. He is shunned and dreaded by all who once knew him and lives on the alms given by travelers and those in the towns who are able and willing to help them. When the ten lepers met our Savior they lifted up their voices from afar in entreaty and supplication for help, perhaps with the thought that He would give them money; but He commanded them to go according to the law, and show themselves to the priests; and as they went, behold, they were healed. As then, so now, the leprosy is incurable except by a special manifestation of divine power; as then, so now, the lepers cry out, "Unclean, unclean," and raise their voices in entreaty for help as the traveler approaches them; as then, so now, they are shunned by all; they live apart as already described, and subsist on the charity of the benevolently disposed. For more than three thousand years the condition of the lepers in the Bible Lands has remained practically unchanged.

Dipping the Sop.

Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when He had dipped the sop, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.—John 13: 26.

The dipping of a "sop" is common unto this day in the East. If you are invited to a feast among the Bedouins you will have a place at the side of the host at the meal. If he desires to show you special honor, he will take a choice bit of meat from the large dish with his fingers and place it in your mouth. In the same way he may also give you a sop when he has dipped it. A large dish contains the meat which is covered with a thick gravy. The entire mass has been cooked until it is easily separated with the fingers, for among these primitive people knives, forks or spoons are not in common use. Thin slices of bread are dipped into the dish and soaked with the fluid part of the food, and this is the "sop" referred to in the text. The fact that our Lord dipped a sop in this way and gave it to Judas Iscariot shows that the traitor must have had a seat near the Master during the meal, since he was within reach of His hand. While the beloved John sat on one side of Jesus, Judas may have reclined on the other. The entire scene of the last supper is full of deep and absorbing interest, and a careful study of the conditions surrounding a modern feast in Palestine shows the

humble and simple manner in which the Son of God instituted His great feast of love.

The Threshing Floor.

Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.—Matt. 3: 12.

The threshing floors in the Holy Land are now what they were when Christ was there, and what they were when king David, moved by the Lord, bought the possession of Ornan the Jebusite on Mount Moriah, pointed out by the flashing sword of the angel of God, afterward to become the site of the great temple to be built by Solomon. Usually an elevated spot is selected so that the wind may have free access to the floor and carry away the chaff when the farmer cleans his grain. The ground is made level and tamped until it becomes hard and solid, and then the sheaves of wheat are thrown upon the hard ground and the unmuzzled ox treads out the grain as he walks slowly and lazily over the floor, occasionally taking up a mouthful of grain and straw. The command, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn," is quite literally observed to-day, as when it was first given, but there are just enough mean, stingy farmers in Palestine who begrudge

the patient ox his share of the food and so muzzle him, thus giving force to the scriptural injunction.

The cleaning of the floor, or rather the grain, is a very simple process. The fan referred to in the text is either a wooden shovel or a fork made of the same material. When the wind is blowing with sufficient force the husbandman goes to the threshing floor and with shovel or fork throws the grain and chaff high in the air, and the wind catches the chaff and drives it away. The Psalmist refers to this when he says: "The ungodly are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away." The process of throwing the grain into the air is continued until the floor is thoroughly purged and then the wheat is gathered into the garner. In some cases the garners are small cistern-like excavations made in the ground, and in these the tiller of the soil hides away his grain. As when the Bible was written, so now the robbers often carry away the hard-earned crop of the husbandman, and so he hides away his grain in the garners dug in the ground. The entire absence of rain during all the spring and summer months makes the open threshing floor and the garners here described possible. Reference is made in the text to garnering the wheat, and the figure used is a most beautiful one. As the farmers hide away their grain from the enemy, the robbers, so the Lord hides away

"Thou Shalt not Muzzle the Ox that Treadeth out the Corn."

His wheat, those who love and serve Him, from the enemy of their souls. In His garner they rest secure, for they are dead and their lives are hid with Christ in God.

Lilies of the Field.

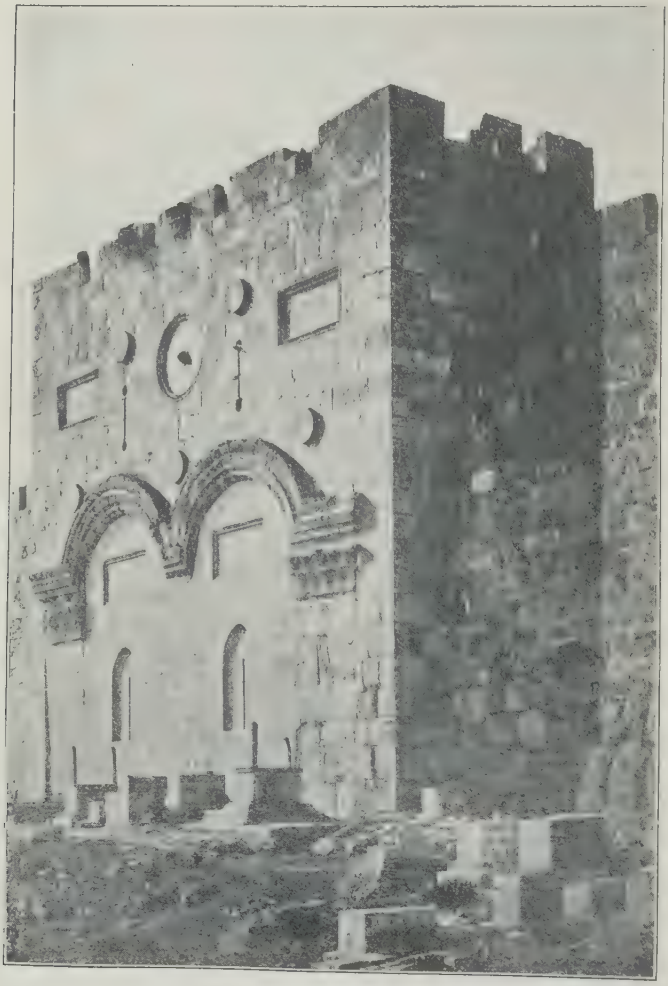
Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?—Matt. 6: 28-30.

In all the towns and villages in Syria the village ovens are as common as the houses of the natives themselves, for almost every home has its own oven. Imagine a large jug that would hold from twenty to thirty gallons, remove the handle, cut a hole in one side large enough to put in the fuel and the bread ready to be baked, the neck and mouth of the jug serving as a chimney, the entire structure built of mud and shaped by hand, and you have a fairly correct idea of the oven of Bible lands.

The lilies of the field and the flowers of the grass bloom in great profusion in Palestine. I have seen the hills and valleys covered with bright, beautiful flowers and am sure that even Solomon in the riches of his glory was not arrayed like the beautiful blossom colored by the artist hand of God. In the morning the women go out, sickle in hand, and

cut down the grass and the flowers thereof; and after it is dried in the heat of the day it is tied in small bundles and on the morrow it is cast into the oven to heat it for the baking of the bread. The grass and flowers burn rapidly and produce considerable heat, so that with this kind of fuel alone the oven is sufficiently heated to do the baking.

As it was in the days of our Lord, so it is to-day. The flowers bloom in all their beauty to-day and to-morrow are cast into the oven.



Gate Closed With a Wall.

The Eastern Gate Closed with a Wall.

Then He brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary which looketh toward the east, and it was shut. Then said the Lord unto me, This gate shall be shut, and no man shall enter in by it.—Ezek. 44: 1, 2.

The eastern wall of the city of Jerusalem, though built as late as the fourteenth century, stands on the foundation of the ancient or Solomonic wall. This has been abundantly proven by excavations made along the side of the outer eastern wall. The original foundation, laid by Solomon's workmen and bearing the marks of the Phœnician masons, was discovered, and all controversy as to the eastern boundary line of ancient Jerusalem was ended. The present eastern wall, with its gates, stands upon the foundation laid by Solomon's workmen. In this wall is a gate closed with heavy masonry, and without doubt it is the gate east of the outer sanctuary spoken of in the text. Its position in the eastern wall, and its nearness to where the temple with its outer sanctuary toward the east stood, settles this question. Why should this, of all the gates of the city, be closed? Why should the other gates of the city stand open day and night and this one in the eastern wall of the city, overlooking the valley of the Kidron, the garden of Gethsemane and the Mount of Olives be closed so that no one can go in or come out thereat? These are questions

that occur to the mind of every Bible student who visits Jerusalem and stands by the closed gate. The answer to the question is to be found in the words of the prophet: "This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it." As you stand by the gate, closed with solid masonry—and the photogravure given herewith shows it just as plainly as if you stood among the Mohammedans outside the gate—you have before you a wonderful fulfillment of a remarkable prophecy.

Open Gates and Open Wall.

Therefore thy gates shall be open continually: they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought.—Isa. 60: 11.

The walls surrounding the cities of Palestine were built as means of defense, and the gates were made strong and secure so as to withstand the attacks of the enemy. In times of war these were kept closed continually, so that the defenders of the city might not be surprised by the sudden attacks. In times of peace the gates were open from the rising to the setting of the sun, and the belated traveler who sought admittance after the going down of the sun was compelled to call watchman and porter; and if he was entitled to entrance into the city a small gate in the larger one was cautiously opened

Joppa Gate, with Wall.

and the friend allowed to enter the city. This was the custom even in recent times, and it has been but a few years, comparatively speaking, since the gates of the city of Jerusalem have been left open continually and have not been shut day or night. I have gone into the city in the evening, at midnight and in the early morning before the dawn of day, and have found the gates standing open.

But not only are the gates of the city left open day and night, but a portion of the outer wall has been removed, and a roadway made so that one may now drive a carriage into the Holy City. In 1898, when the German Emperor visited Palestine, the authorities ordered the wall between the Joppa gate and the Tower of David to be removed and a highway or street constructed so that the Emperor's carriage might be driven into the city. Accordingly this was done, and now the open space between the tower and gate, some forty feet in width, is taken up with a macadamized street which affords an excellent driveway in and out of Jerusalem. Prior to removing the wall and filling in the moat at the side of the tower a row of sheds stood on the south side of the narrow street, and these were used for shops and bazaars by tradesmen. The Joppa Gate, the Tower of David, the wall, the sheds and moat are all clearly shown in the first photogravure, while the second shows

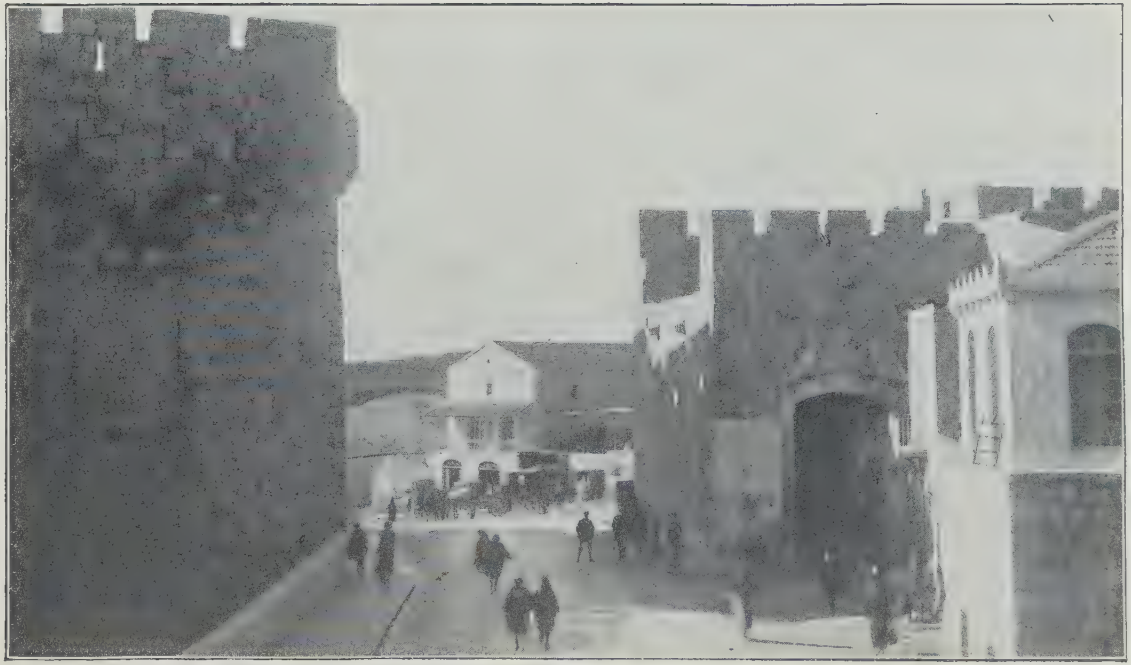
shops and walls removed, the moat filled up and the open street passing out of the city between tower and gate. The pictures explain better than words can describe the situation before and after the removal of the wall and the opening of the street.

It seems strange enough that while the eastern gate of the city overlooking the valley of Jehoshaphat and the Mount of Olives is closed, and no one may go in thereat, all the rest of the gates of Jerusalem stand open continually, and that a portion of the western wall was removed so that an open street could be made. It would seem that here we have another literal fulfillment of prophecy. It is true that some think the words of Isaiah herewith quoted have only a spiritual significance, but it seems to me that they refer with equal force to the present condition at Jerusalem, and afford a striking illustration of the fulfillment of prophecy.

The Sunken Gates.

The Lord hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion. . . . Her gates are sunk into the ground; He hath destroyed and broken her bars.—Lam. 2: 8, 9.

While the eastern wall of Jerusalem stands on the foundation laid by Solomon's builders, the southern wall of the modern city is far north of the ancient structure. Recent excavations have located the foundation of the southern wall of the ancient



Joppa Gate, Wall Removed.

city. In 1898 I met Dr. Bliss at Jerusalem where he was engaged in excavating and tracing the foundation of the southern wall. With him I visited the excavations, climbed down the shafts and explored the dark tunnels and saw the ancient foundations. At one point an ancient gate was discovered, and upon excavating about it, it was found that it occupied the site of not only one, but of two earlier gates. These three gates, one built above the other, are to be plainly seen. The first thrown down "*sank into the ground,*" as it were, and then the second was built above the first, and so also the third. I examined all this very carefully and saw the sockets in which the gates were swung. "Her gates are sunk in the ground; he hath destroyed her bars." The sunken gates of the wall of Zion bear testimony in these last days to the truth of the Book of God.

The Wine Bottles of Palestine.

Neither do men put new wine into old bottles; else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.—Matt. 9: 17.

The use of the skins of animals for bottles in the East is as old as the records of the human race. An ancient Assyrian sculpture, showing a woman giving drink to a child from what appears to be a kid skin, shows that bottles of this kind were in

use before Abraham migrated to Palestine. The bottle which Hagar carried with her into the wilderness and from which she gave Ishmael to drink was doubtless made of the skin of a kid and shows their early use for carrying water. Bottles of this kind were used for milk in the days of the judges: "And she opened a bottle of milk and gave him drink;" and in Samuel we find them mentioned as being used for wine. Bottles of the same kind are still in use in Palestine. In 1893 I visited Hebron and while there saw where the skins were being prepared and made ready to serve as bottles. The Arabs use the skins of goats and kids for the most part, and when filled with liquid they very much resembles the shape of the animal. The skin is stripped from the body whole, the head being cut off, and a slit is cut lengthwise in the neck so that the body will pass through in the stripping process. This is afterwards sewed up, a piece of soft leather added, and the neck of the animal thus becomes the mouth of the bottle. The Arabs tan them with acacia bark, allowing the hair to remain on the skin, and this forms the outside of the bottle.

When large caravans cross the desert the water bottles are made from the skin of the ox and two of these filled with water make a camel load. The outside of the bottles is covered with grease to

Wine Bottles.

prevent leakage and evaporation. In using them for wine they must be quite new. The wine is put into them before fermentation is completed and when the skins are green they stretch and are strong enough to hold the expanding wine.

Shishak King of Egypt.

So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all: he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made.—2 Chron. 12: 9.

The record of the invasion of Judea by the king of Egypt is only briefly mentioned in the Bible, and yet this brief mention has been most remarkably corroborated by discoveries in the land of the Pharaohs. Jeroboam fled to Egypt and sought the protection of Shishak and afterwards, no doubt incited by the fugitive king of Israel, he went up against the land of Judea and subdued it. He also took Jerusalem and spoiled the temple. After his return to Egypt from his victorious Judean expedition he caused a remarkable bas-relief to be carved on the great temple of Karnak, at Thebes, which had been profusely adorned by Seti I and Rameses II. The photogravure shows part of the sculpture. A close examination shows Shishak in his war costume, in heroic size, "holding by the hair of their

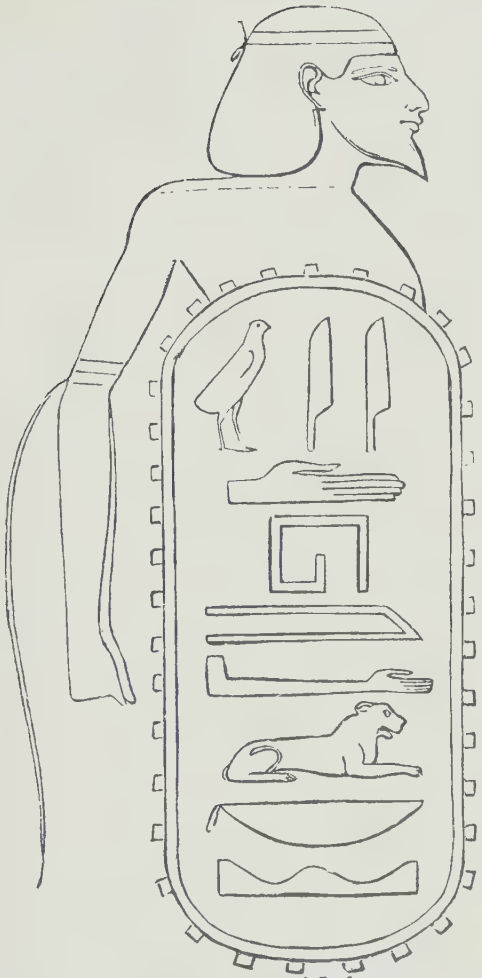
heads with his left hand thirty-eight captive Asiatic chiefs, and with an iron mace uplifted in his right threatening them with destruction. Further, he has caused himself to be figured a second time, and represented in the act of leading captive a hundred and thirty-three cities or tribes, each specified by name and personified in an individual form, accompanied by a cartouche containing their respective names. Among the ninety names that are legible, more than forty are to be identified with towns of Palestine named in the Bible.

Referring to Shishak Wilkinson says: "He was the Shishak of Scripture, who in the fifth year of Rehoboam, B. C. 971, marched against Judea with twelve hundred chariots and sixty thousand horses, and a numerous body of infantry, composed of Libyans, Sukkiim, and Ethiopians: took all the walled towns of Judea, pillaged the temple at Jerusalem; and though no very extensive buildings were erected by him, the sculptures he added on the walls of Karnak suffice to show that this campaign is recorded with the names of the captured places."[1]

Brugsch, the great Egyptologist, says: "The story of his campaign has been related on the south walls of the temple of Amen at Karnak. On the

[1] The Ancient Egyptians, vol. 1, p. 92.

Shishak and His Captives.



Rehoboam, King of Judea.

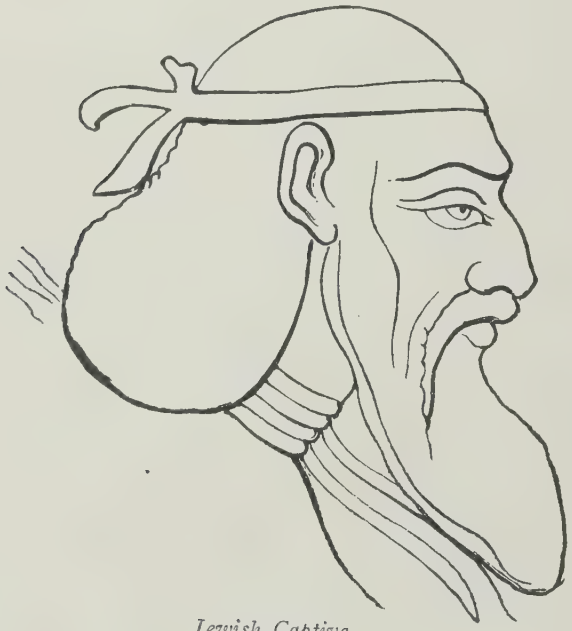
south external wall, behind the picture of the victor, is a picture of king Rameses II; to the east of the room called the Hall of Bubastites, the spectator beholds the colossal image of the Egyptian sovereign dealing heavy blows upon the captive Jews. The names of the conquered towns and districts are paraded in long rows." [1]

Lenormant, the French writer, was the first to speak of the Jewish cast of face observable in the features of some of Shishak's captives. The writer was impressed the same way. On the second visit paid to the temple at Karnak a very careful examination of the sculpture was made and the impression grew stronger that here on the wall of this ancient temple are to be seen faces bearing the Jewish type. One may very readily see that some of the faces are smoothly shaven, while others are represented with full beards. There is also the unmistakable Jewish nose to be plainly seen. The head of one of the captives of Rameses III is herewith given, and this is of the same general type as those referred to in the sculpture of Shishak.

In this imperishable record carved in stone we have a remarkable confirmation of the Holy Scriptures. Not only the name of the king is given, but the names of towns which he conquered and the

[1] Egypt under the Pharaohs, pp. 375, 376.

provinces which submitted to him are given. There is also the striking resemblance in some of the sculptured faces to the Jewish type of Palestine. Stronger corroborative testimony than this could not be found.



Jewish Captive.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN.

The Conclusion.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.—Eccl. 12: 13, 14.

Briefly, and with the imperfections attending all human effort, this sketch of the evidences of Christianity has been written and compiled. It does not cover the entire ground of the Eternal Verities of God's Holy Book. In the great field, rich and abundant in testimony and evidence of the truth of the Bible, the gleaning has been done, and the precious grains of truth are given to the reader with the hope that the faith of the believer will be confirmed and made stronger and that he will be enabled to give with meekness and fear a reason for the hope which is in him, and that he who is troubled with doubts will be led into a clearer conception of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. If under God's blessing this should result from the reading of this little book it will be a cause of rejoicing on the part of all God's children, and more than recompense the labor of writing and compiling.

Together we have followed the history of the Bible from its beginnings to its final completion, and have found the chain of evidence touching its antiquity, its authenticity, and its credibility of such surpassing strength that it has remained unbroken through all the centuries and will so remain until every word of God's Book shall have been fulfilled. Like tracing a mighty river from its mouth to its source, we have historically traced the Bible from the present time to the holy men of God who wrote it as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. As the river broadens and increases as it flows from source to mouth, so too the evidences of Christianity gain in volume as they flow, until they become an overwhelming force which must carry conviction to the heart of the honest searcher for the truth.

Together we have considered the fulfilled prophecy of the Bible and have been astonished to find that its prophecies have become history. We have seen the Jews, a once powerful nation, broken up and scattered over all parts of the world, and, without a nation, without government of their own, without a central organization, they have retained all their peculiarities, so that an orthodox Jew of to-day is as was the Jew of the days of Christ and the time of Moses. We have seen great cities, the centers of wealth and of the world's trade and com-

merce, become heaps of ruins in some cases, and so completely destroyed and obliterated in others that it is even impossible to determine to-day the site of their foundations, thus fulfilling to the letter, and in the minutest detail the prophecies of the Bible.

We have examined the well attested and clearly proven miracles of our Lord Jesus Christ, "a man approved of God among you by miracles and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know," to the end that we might not be left without evidence that He is the Son of God. Our hearts have been filled with sorrow because of His cruel sufferings and His death on the cross, but how quickly the gloom passed away as we read the indisputable evidence of His resurrection from the dead, and how joyfully we have followed Him as He went in and out among those He had chosen, "until the day in which He was taken up after that He through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles." We have also journeyed together in the land where our Lord was born, lived, worked, suffered and died and rose from the dead, and have seen and been astonished at the wonderful agreement between the Land and the Book.

Having examined the evidences of the truth of God's Holy Book, let us consider our obligation

to study the Word of Truth and to make it the rule of our faith and practice. The importance of the revealed will of God concerning us as given in the Bible demands of us a careful, painstaking study. Its study should be entered upon in all seriousness and with a determination to know and do what God would have us know and do. "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." These words of the Lord come to us with all the force of a divine command, and we should not fail to heed them.

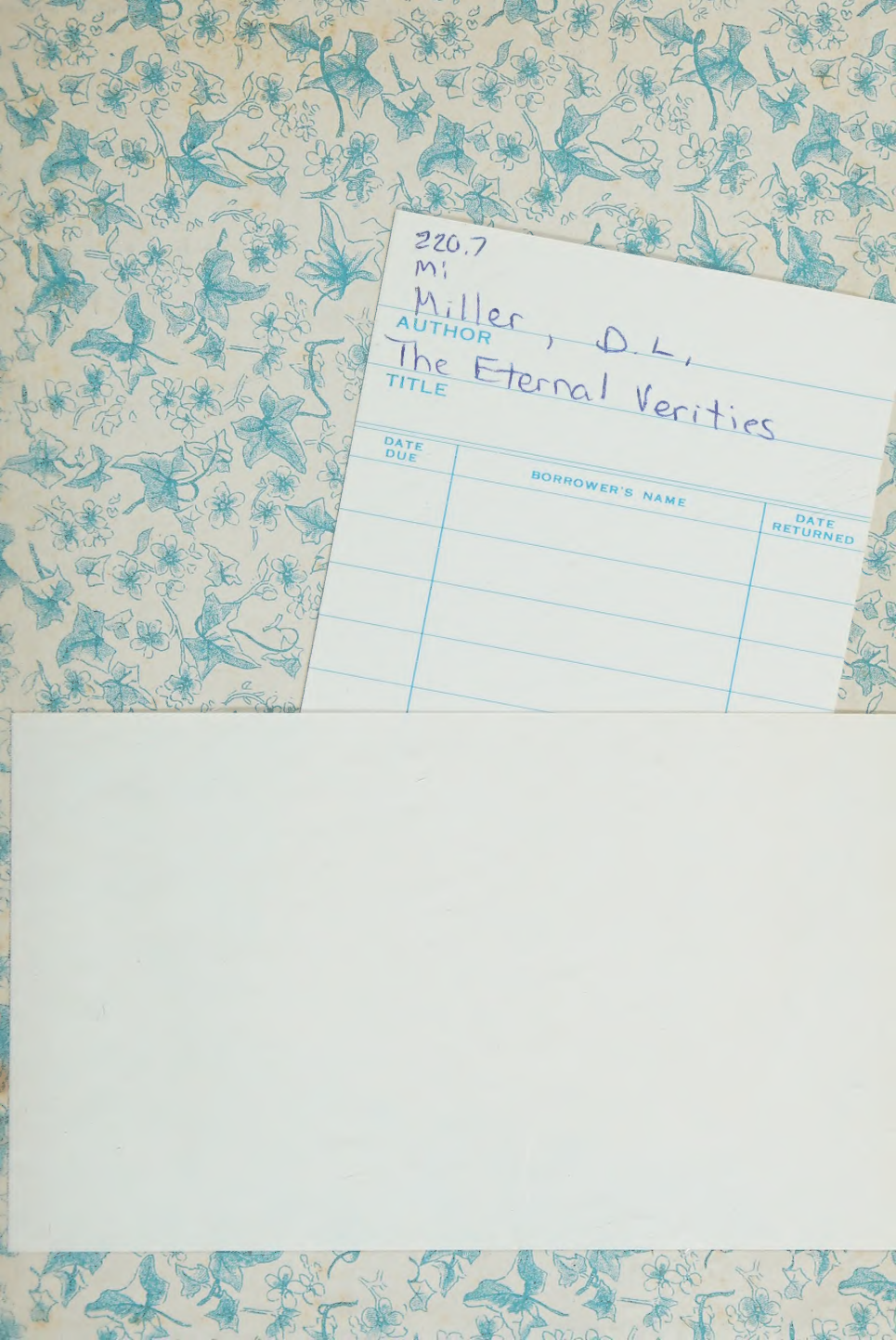
Let us study the Scriptures, not to confirm our own preconceived notions, but that we may know the truth, and knowing it follow wheresoever it leadeth. It may lead to the separation of church relations, but let us be bound to Christ by the truest of all tests, "He that loveth Me keepeth My commandments," rather than be bound to a church organization that fails to accept and obey that form of doctrine to which we have been delivered. In the great day of all days, when we shall stand before the Judge of all the world, the question as to what church I belonged to will disappear and in its place will stand the greater question, Have I obeyed from the heart the commandments of my blessed Lord?

Let us consider in the study of the Book our obligation and indebtedness to God in that He has given us a written revelation and that it contains the plan to salvation for all the human race No greater boon has come to us than salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. For this one great blessing we might spend our lives in praising Him to whom all praise belongs, and in expressing our gratitude for His great love, and yet but a tithe would be given of what we owe Him for His great love and mercy.

Let us study the Holy Scriptures to learn what God's will is concerning us, and, having learned, let us, without hesitation, follow in the footsteps of our Crucified and Risen Redeemer. Let us not be forgetful of the words of our Lord when He said, "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven." The Holy Scriptures being true, it behooves us to render cheerful, willing, loving obedience to all things whatsoever are commanded us in them. This is insisted on all the stronger because the Lord Himself insisted so strongly on obedience to His Word. To John on the isle of Patmos He said: "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the

tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

Let us study the Scriptures daily and make the doing of the sayings of Christ our meat and our drink. Let us not only have an intellectual knowledge of God's Word, but a spiritual knowledge as well. We want the Bible not only in the head, but in the heart also. Christ was and is the Word of God. If we take His Word into our hearts, then we take Christ into our hearts, and obeying Him we grow day by day until we attain the full stature of manhood in Him. "If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love. . . . Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."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Miller, D.L.
AUTHOR
The Eternal Verities
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